

The Late Georgian Period

The Connoisseur Period Guides
to the Houses, Decoration, Furnishing and Chattels
of the Classic Periods

Edited by Ralph Edwards & L. G. G. Ramsey

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The Tudor Period

1500—1603

The Stuart Period

1603—1714

The Early Georgian Period

1714—1760

The Late Georgian Period

1760—1810

The Regency Period

1810—1830

The Early Victorian Period

1830—1860

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The
Late
Georgian
Period

1760-1810

London
The Connoisseur

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Girandole from Hepplewhite's *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide*, 1789.

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Foreword

L. G. G. RAMSEY

In his Foreword to the first volume (*The Tudor Period*) in this unique series of *Connoisseur Period Guides* Mr Ralph Edwards has already referred to the fact that the arts of any period constitute a unity or synthesis and that they should be studied together, thereby enhancing their understanding and appreciation. This series of *Guides* enables precisely this cultural, conjunctional process to be effected. For this reason it will be clear to those who acquire this and the other volumes in the series why their composition and presentation are now labelled unique.

Possibly one of the most refreshing aspects of the idea which first led to the preparation of these books is that they treat with all the people of England, the events which stirred, or which contributed to, their daily lives, particularly in the domestic field, their arts and crafts, music, costume, and so on, in an altogether unusual way. Not only do we learn of how, in the special period to which this volume is devoted, the country houses of peer and gentleman were the nurseries of national culture and tradition and how, until the French Wars broke the tradition after the turn of the century, the Grand Tour widened the cultural horizon of the English ruling class, but we are given an absorbing insight – and this is both important and factually interesting – into the homes and economics of the humble, less pretentious men and women who invariably reflect the essential qualities of any nation. In this the English have probably as fascinating a history to tell as any other peoples of the world.

In short, whilst one chapter in particular which follows gives the historical background to the period, and the political and economic conditions

prevailing, it will be apparent that the other chapters largely concern themselves with that indispensable, individual background to all ways of life – the social history behind the development and change of the habits and pastimes of a people, and the reasons for those changes.

Those who have contributed their scholarship and research to this volume – and there is new knowledge to be found on a good many of its pages – have been fortunate in so doing. They have been engaged in recording a long and happy period, a great 'Age of Collections': a period when, for example, the London *Connoisseur*, in 1774, was reporting that it was expedient for those ladies 'who are apt to be hysterical when the Town empties, to prepare for their removal to *Tunbridge, Cheltenham, Bath and Scarborough*, for the Benefit of the Waters'; when 'a great branch Candle Stick' (from a chandelier) fell down over Lady Holland, narrowly missing her head. It is well, also, to appreciate the conditions which existed for an unmarried clerk, of a 'middling station', living in London in a furnished room rented at half a crown a week in 1767. There was no delicate furniture, decorated with classical motifs for him, but 'a half tester bedstead, with brown linsey woolsey furniture, a bed and bolster, half flock, half feathers . . . a red linsey woolsey window curtain'.

In all this, social history is interwoven to an engrossing degree: and who could be more highly qualified to define this side of a nation's life than Dr G. M. Trevelyan? 'Without social history economic history is barren and political history is unintelligible.' These *Guides* pay regard to this wisdom.



Coat of Arms of George III from William Caslon's Type Specimen of 1785

The Age of George III



John Wilkes, from the engraving by Hogarth, 1763

The Age of George III

IAN R. CHRISTIE

The year 1760, in which George III succeeded to the throne of his grandfather, marks no particular landmark in British history. A young, conservative-minded personality had become head of the state, a new factor in its politics: but the broad flood-tide of the nation's exuberant life swept on unchecked and undeflected. By this date Great Britain was firmly set, with slow but gathering momentum, on far-reaching lines of development and change. Signal progress was achieved in the next sixty years. Up to within a few years of George III's accession, the country was, internally, a land of stable population, predominantly agricultural in its economy though with an enterprising and gradually expanding industry; and, externally, one – and not clearly the strongest – of a group of west European states reaching out in competition with each other towards the heritage of world trade and empire. Very different was the scene at the close of the reign in 1820. By then, the mode of living and the resources of Britain's mounting population were being transformed by the great advances in transport and industry commonly described as the Industrial Revolution. And the successful conclusion of the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France left her indisputable mistress of the seas with unrivalled opportunities for trade and imperial expansion.

The sinews of power

Its people is the heart of a nation's strength. When, soon after the turn of the century, the statistician, John Rickman, began to analyse the figures available in the early census returns and in

other sources, contemporaries were amazed to find that the number of the people had increased by nearly half since the King's accession and was still increasing. During most of the first half of the eighteenth century, the population of England and Wales had been fairly stable. But from about 1750 an upward trend began. In 1760, at the accession of George III, the people numbered some six million and a half. By the time of the first census in 1801, the figure was about nine million, and each decennial census thereafter disclosed a population mounting ever higher. In the period 1760–70 the rate of increase was about 7 per cent; for the last decade of the reign, after 1811, it rose to the remarkable level of over 16 per cent. Scotland showed a similar trend, and in Ireland the rate of increase was even higher.

No simple explanation can be given for this remarkable expansion in numbers. It may be attributed with varying degrees of certainty to several factors. Agricultural improvement – of which more below – probably played a considerable part, by making a better variety and quality of food available and by removing the check of periodic famine. Fresh vegetables were more abundant – the potato was the basis of Irish prolificity, and it formed an increasing part of the diet of the English peasantry though they never became so completely dependent upon it. Stock-rearing with the aid of root-crops for winter feed made it possible to vary diet with fresh meat in the winter months and may also have made more milk available. The development of regional economies, based upon better transport facilities and involving

as one consequence a greater mobility of labour, may have evened out the local disparities in the numbers of the sexes to be found from one village to the next, and so have increased the rate of marriage. The extent of the grants of poor relief was thought to encourage early marriages. Of more importance, perhaps, than any save the first of these factors, was the growing attention paid to health, with its startling effect upon the death rate and more especially on infant mortality. About the middle of the eighteenth century seventy-five out of every hundred children died at birth or before their sixth year: by its end the rate had fallen to 41 per cent. If medicine had made no startling technical advances during most of this period, at least its practitioners had grasped the all-importance of cleanliness and fresh air in combating disease; and their knowledge was used and spread abroad by the hospitals which had been founded both in London and the provinces during the earlier years of the century. At the century's end a great technical advance was at last achieved: Edward Jenner's discovery of vaccination, a powerful new weapon in the battle against small-pox – hitherto a terrible scourge, especially to children – was thought by contemporaries to have contributed greatly to the rapid increase in population. As each additional child saved was a potential parent, the effect on the rate of population increase was cumulative, until, at the very end of the reign, counteracting tendencies to check the marriage and birth rates began to make their appearance.

Some eighteenth-century writers had expressed fears lest Britain's power might fail for want of numbers. Such an idea, which had in any case never been widely accepted, was entirely dispelled by the first census taken in 1801. On the contrary, it was clear that the country's human resources were on the upgrade, and that youth, with its vigour, exuberance, enterprise and eager response to novelty and change, formed an increasing proportion of them. Measured in terms of the age of her population, Britain in the early nineteenth century was a country of youth: here lay part of the secret of her strength, in war and in peace.

Another part of this strength lay in her com-

mand of natural resources: to this advancements in agriculture, transport and industry all contributed in plenteous measure.

The demand of a growing population for more food was the main stimulus to agricultural improvement: indeed, from 1793, after the commencement of the great war against Revolutionary France, this became a matter of official concern, which led to the creation of the advisory Board of Agriculture. In the enclosure of waste and common land, the marling of light soils, the use of crop rotations, and the improvement of breeds of cattle and sheep, the men of George III's reign were less inventors or originators than followers of lines of advance already marked out by pioneers in the earlier part of the century, but their zeal and enterprise made an indispensable contribution to the nation's prosperity. To quote but one name: Thomas William Coke, of Holkham, pursued experiments which turned his native county of Norfolk into one of the granaries of England. Information about new farming methods was constantly circulated. Coke himself turned his annual sheep-shearings into agricultural conferences attended by farming enthusiasts from every part of the country: these meetings even achieved an international fame. By the medium of books and pamphlets Arthur Young won brilliant success as a popularizer of agricultural science, publicizing the latest results of observations and experiments which he culled on his journeys across the length and breadth of England. Through the enterprise of the landed aristocracy and gentry, agricultural production virtually kept pace with population throughout the reign.

Road and water transport were vastly improved. By the middle of the century much attention was being paid to the country's roads, and numerous turnpike trusts were established for this purpose. But better roads could not meet the needs of industry. They facilitated an increasing long distance traffic mainly of passengers and of goods of small bulk and high value, but for most purposes the cost of moving bulky and heavy goods, upon which tolls had to be paid every few miles, made this mode of conveyance unduly expensive. So, almost simultaneously with the beginning of the

reign, the demands of commerce and industry for cheaper transport facilities set going the great canal boom of the later eighteenth century, of which the wealthy Duke of Bridgewater and his brilliant engineer, James Brindley, were the pioneers. Within a few years, cheaper, quicker transport by the new canals gave an enormous stimulus to industrial development.

The year 1760 is no longer considered as marking the commencement of an 'Industrial Revolution'. The developments in industry which took place in the reign of George III followed naturally from those which had occurred earlier in the century: at the most there was a quickening of pace, technical advances following more rapidly one upon another and reacting over wider spheres of industrial activity. Development was uneven, and some industries forged ahead far faster than others, cotton and iron making the most rapid advances. Like children captivated by a new toy, the industrial entrepreneurs were elated and enthralled at the new powers which inventions were bestowing upon them – witness, for instance, John Wilkinson, whose fanatical interest in the uses to which abundant supplies of iron might be put went so far as directing that he should be buried in an iron coffin, who built the first iron bridge in 1779, experimented with iron-built lighters for inland navigation, and supplied forty miles of cast iron piping for the water supply of Paris. The importance of James Watt's invention of the steam engine has always been singled out in popular imagination; and before the end of the reign the advantages of this revolutionary contrivance, both for pumping out mines and as a source of motive power for machines in factories, were clearly apparent over large sections of the field of industry. New machines and new processes quickened the pace of industrial output. Really dramatic results only began to show in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In so far as what is meant by the 'Industrial Revolution' was a sudden quickening of the rate of production, the turning point came about 1780, towards the close of the American War of Independence. If the figures for imports and exports in the peace-decade 1764–73 are taken as a starting point, comparison shows

that trade fell off slightly in the next decennium, during most of which the American War was dislocating commerce and diverting the nation's energies. But in the next peace-decade, 1784–93, the value of imports and exports was between a fifth and a quarter higher than in the years 1764–73, and each year showed an upward movement, which continued through the war period after 1793.

Industrial development brought changes in the way of life of many of the common people, but generalization about whether these changes were for better or for worse is almost impossible. One feature of the period which greatly struck contemporaries was the crowding together of work-people in factories. This was not a new phenomenon; nor, on the other hand, was it nearly so widespread as later in the nineteenth century: but with the expansion of industry it became more common. Conditions in factories were often undoubtedly bad, but it is questionable whether they were worse, or the hours of labour longer, than hours and conditions in domestic industry. Probably the most hateful feature of factory life was its compulsory uniformity and strict discipline: there was also social prejudice against it, grounded upon a terminological confusion of the poor-law work-house with the factory and upon the fact that factory labour was recruited largely from among tramps and paupers, the least reputable flotsam and jetsam of society. Nevertheless, factory life offered the attraction of wages which, so far as one can generalize from the information available, seem to have been on the whole rather better than those obtainable in domestic industry and clearly higher than wages in agriculture. Apart from the disruptive effect of the business cycle, much of the social distress which was to be revealed by both private and public enquiry in the years after the close of the Napoleonic wars was due less to the new industrial developments than to the economic dislocation produced by war and then by readjustment to peace conditions.

As the population grew and was attracted to centres of factory industry, so its distribution within the country changed. Already, in the earlier part of the century, a tendency to become relatively

more populous was discernible in Lancashire and the central and west midlands. This trend continued after 1760, but it was now accompanied by a much more rapid growth of towns – Manchester, for instance, had in 1757 less than 20,000 inhabitants, but by 1790 they numbered 50,000 and were nearly double that figure by the turn of the century. Locally the consequences were over-crowding, cellar-dwellings, jerry-built tenements with inadequate sanitation or ventilation, squalid conditions: but as yet only a small minority of the nation was affected; the greater part of the English people still lived in the countryside, and only just over a fifth in towns with 10,000 or more inhabitants.

The oligarchs

Social and political leadership in this robust society still rested predominantly in the hands of the landed class. Within this social group the distinction between aristocracy and gentry was more artificial than real. Title had meaning in the court circle. But numbers of country gentlemen could boast a rent-roll and a local influence greater than that of many members of the peerage. From time to time, in the obituary notices of wealthy commoners, comes the phrase: 'reputed one of the richest men in the Kingdom'. Such outstanding individuals were of course exceptions: more common were those comfortably situated gentlemen with £2,000 to £5,000 a year, the placid domesticity of whose lives is portrayed for us in the novels of Jane Austen.¹

The country houses of peer and gentleman were the nurseries of national culture and tradition. Gentry of the wealthier sort sent their sons to Westminster or to mix with the young lords at Eton: the future squire would learn the elements of his law at the inns of court: for some there followed a spell at Oxford or Cambridge, capped perhaps by the broadening experience of the Grand Tour. Till the long French wars broke the tradition after the turn of the century, the Grand Tour helped to widen the cultural horizon of the Eng-

lish ruling class. In the earlier years of the reign, Horace Walpole or George Augustus Selwyn moved as easily in the society of Paris as that of London. The end of a war, 1763, 1783, 1802, saw a rush of Englishmen to France, to renew old acquaintance and re-experience the well-appreciated stimulus of foreign contacts: a spirit of international fraternity outweighed all bitterness bred of national rivalries. Italy was more difficult of access – nevertheless numbers of young Englishmen on tour reached Florence, Venice, Rome, and absorbed some knowledge of their people and their style. Other parts of the Continent were perhaps less popular, but were by no means neglected.

Richard Arkwright, the cotton manufacturer, it is said, contemplated accumulating enough wealth to pay off the national debt! Josiah Wedgwood of pottery fame died reputedly worth over half a million. These men were exceptional, but they stand as reminders that trade and industry were increasingly the basis of fortunes which could compete on even terms with those derived from the land. Land and trade were interests which sometimes might, and did, clash in the sphere of politics. But Britain gained inestimably from the circumstance that no caste barrier divided landowner and merchant. The enterprising landed proprietor, like Coke of Holkham, was at heart a business-man: it might be pure chance whether the undertakings in which he interested himself were entirely agricultural, or whether he branched out, as did the Duke of Bridgewater, into investment in canals and the production of coal. Younger sons of the peerage and gentry went into commerce: and often enough their elder brothers, who took the land or the title, picked their wives from the wealthy merchant class. Snobbery there might be, but no caste division: thus in Staffordshire the leading landed magnates paid due personal attention to Josiah Wedgwood, treating him as one of the important figures in county life – as indeed he was.

Political power, the conduct of public affairs, lay in the hands of the landowners and, to some extent, of the commercial class. In the countryside, the squires ran the local administration and dispensed justice, in quarter and petty sessions, and

¹ About 1809 "all the country gentlemen of any note" in Kent were said to have £3,000–£4,000 a year (*British Public Characters*, Vol. X (1809–1810), p. 534).

through their membership of improvement boards and turnpike trusts. At the centre they brought their influence to bear on the national councils in parliament. To the men of the eighteenth century, parliament was primarily a meeting place of interests. The greatest of these was the landed interest, for those who held landed property had a stake in the country more distinct than that of any other class. By comparison the commercial interest was less important, though it was recognized that its claims must also be given due weight. And there were also others: for instance, attention – perhaps at times too much attention – was usually paid to the West Indian planters from whose ranks came a small, compact group of men in the House of Commons. Mere numbers having no place in the orthodox contemporary theory of representation, the astounding, antiquated anomalies of the representative system drew little fire except from a small radical minority. What matter that a green mound at Old Sarum returned two members, and by the *fat* of a single individual who owned it? Pocket boroughs were even defended, as providing a way into parliament for representatives of the landed and commercial interest with the minimum of trouble and expense. The metropolitan area, as radicals were never weary of pointing out, had but eight members in parliament – two for Middlesex, two for Westminster, four for London – whereas by the proportion of land tax its inhabitants paid it could well claim fifty. But compensation was provided within the system, since thirty or forty London merchants would usually buy their way into parliament *via* the small rotten and pocket boroughs of the southern and western counties. Very populous constituencies appeared positively disadvantageous, at a time when the mass of the people was largely illiterate and entirely indifferent to political questions, and elections became competitions in the provision of bread and circuses – a number of such constituencies were to suffer a measure of disfranchisement at the hands of the propertied reformers of 1832. Except in the counties and a few leading city constituencies (and not always in these) politics played little or no part in the determination of contested parliamentary elections.

Party divisions of the modern type did not exist. The name 'Whig' was regarded as having a mystical aura of constitutionalism and virtue, and from time to time various political groups in opposition laid exclusive claim to it as part of a 'smear' campaign against their successful rivals in office. But its value as a political connotation was *nil*. It is impossible to maintain on the evidence, that the younger Pitt, for instance, was less 'whig' than Charles James Fox. Fox's associate, the Duke of Portland, once spoke of the value to the country of a 'whig' party, but this was only a few months before he carried his political following into Pitt's ministry in a war-coalition.

Limited monarchy

At the head of the government stood the King. In theory he was still the active leader of the executive, enjoying a right to employ the ministers of his personal choice which was sometimes challenged but very generally conceded. The constitution established by the Revolution of 1689 set, so it was assumed, King, Lords and Commons in mutual balance, each with power to keep the activities of the others within due bounds. In practice the King was obliged to carry on the government with close attention to the wishes of the House of Commons, from which, periodically, money or assent to legislation had to be obtained. Convenience dictated the selection of a leading minister in whom the House of Commons placed confidence: no government would last long if this rule were not observed. But the sovereign's choice was not determined, as now, by party, nor did party solely sustain the government in parliament. Political parties in the eighteenth century were no more than personal followings limited in size: the party numbering more than thirty or forty in the House of Commons was exceptional. The members of a government, while drawing part of their parliamentary support from their own factions, relied largely upon the votes of members of two perennial parliamentary groupings which the onset of democracy has since swept out of existence – these were the party of court and administration, composed of courtiers, government officials, contractors, pensioners and parasites,

who gave political allegiance to the King's government whoever composed it, and the independents, for the most part country gentlemen, who scorned attachment either to the court or to a faction and voted as led by their conscience, or their judgment, or by their response to some brilliant piece of oratory. Parliament paid due deference to the King's government. But it stood apart, an independent authority, reserving the right to reject measures of which it disapproved: such a rejection was not, however, normally intended or construed to mean a withdrawal of confidence and did not entail the ministers' resignations.

This eighteenth-century parliamentary system allotted no logical or recognized role to an Opposition, although oppositions were almost always in the field, led by disgruntled politicians who found themselves excluded from office, and backed by the natural critics of authority, who may be encountered in any representative gathering of men. But since the phrase 'the King's government' then carried a more literal meaning than in our modern usage, signifying government by the King and his ministers, a systematic opposition, aimed at discrediting a group of ministers, could plausibly be considered an attack upon the King himself and was often looked upon as discreditable, if not disloyal. Also, as the electorate (such part of it as was politically conscious) did not regard itself as arbiter in the conflict between rival gangs of politicians contesting for office but thought that this should be decided by the King, opposition of this kind was hardly ever successful.

The operation of this system of 'limited monarchy' required good judgment and balance on the part of both the King and his leading minister, qualities not conspicuously present in the early years of the reign. George III, approaching twenty-three at the time of his accession, was particularly nervous and immature, of high ideals and virtue but narrow outlook, entirely without experience of the world, and frankly terrified of his new responsibilities. Brought up by his domineering mother in complete isolation from the youth of aristocratic society – contact with whom, she feared, would corrupt him – it was small wonder that at first he found it almost impossible to

take people as they were. Far too conscious of other people's moral failings, he felt that practically all the politicians were worthless, and thought it hard that he must perforce employ them. Thus at first he clung in desperate dependence upon his friend, Lord Bute, a worthy, serious-minded, well-intentioned man, full of book-learning, but in politics as much a greenhorn as his master and not competent to occupy the leading place in government into which he was soon thrust by the King's insistence. Not for several years, and then, in part, only because he was bullied by George Grenville out of his habit of turning constantly to Bute, did George III begin to stand on his own feet. Thereafter he tried to cover up his lack of talent by incessant industry, and in time he acquired a very considerable experience and knowledge of affairs. But he can hardly be said to have had much aptitude or judgment. Little originality of mind is apparent in his voluminous correspondence with his ministers, and his opinions, once formed, were impervious to the best-marshalled arguments. In private life he had many estimable qualities, a sincere religious feeling, a strong sense of family responsibility, and wide cultural interests. But he had to force himself into his public role by conscious effort, and it was many years before he could play it with assurance. He was conscientious to a fault: but for all the close attention which he paid to the activities of his ministers, it cannot be said that he ever stepped outside his recognized constitutional position, and historians are now agreed that there was no real foundation for the charge that he attempted to resume a vanished royal authority and to pervert the constitution of 1689 – this bogey existed only in the fertile Irish imagination of Edmund Burke. A man of no more than average ability, he could not give a lead in statesmanship: rather he faithfully reflected the conservative opinions and prejudices of the great majority of his subjects on such major political issues as the American War of Independence, constitutional reform, the French Revolution, the emancipation of Roman Catholics.

The combined ineptitude of the King and the politicians at first produced a series of weak and short-lived governments. Consciousness of his

own incapacity for the political game soon drove out Bute. His successor, George Grenville, had good abilities but little vision, and was overbearing and tactless. After two years his services were dispensed with to make way for the even briefer ministry of Lord Rockingham, an amiable amateur who hardly dared open his mouth in the House of Lords. When twelve months later this government dissolved away through internal weakness and the King turned to Chatham, faint hopes appeared of firm leadership and a more stable political order. But almost immediately Chatham was stricken by gout and manic depression, and his deputy and later successor, the Duke of Grafton, a youthful rake who later became a *prim* Unitarian, was a political nonentity. Not until 1770, after five ephemeral ministries in ten years, did government at last settle down to some sort of stability. Lord North, the new first minister, intelligent, witty, popular, imperturbably good-humoured, was a first-rate House of Commons man, though sadly lacking in driving force. He retained office for nearly twelve years, until irretrievable defeat in the American War of Independence finally discredited his ministry and obliged the King, greatly against his will, to part with it. From the subsequent two-year period of political confusion and short-lived ministries a new stable government at last emerged under the leadership of the younger Pitt. Though mistakes can be laid to his charge, Pitt was nevertheless the ablest first minister of George III's reign, active, clever, flexible of mind, as assured of support in the House of Commons as North, but commanding it quite differently, by force of character rather than popularity; far ahead of North in his grasp of economic and financial principles and in his willingness to promote advantageous policies and sound administration. Though out of office between 1801 and 1804, Pitt dominated the political scene from 1784 till his death in 1806 – and even afterwards, for his young followers provided the core of later ministries.

The problems of empire

Problems loomed before these successive governments, requiring far greater powers of

statesmanship than lay at their disposal. Most constant of them was the consolidation and development of empire – empire conceived primarily as an area of trade relations with non-British peoples, Redskins, Asiatics, Africans, rather than as an area of settlement. The reign opened in the midst of a great struggle – the Seven Years War of 1756 to 1763 against France (latterly also against Spain) – which was primarily a war for empire. The successful conclusion of this conflict at the Peace of Paris of 1763 reaffirmed British naval superiority and transferred to British rule large tracts of the empires of her Bourbon rivals. In a spirit of heady self-confidence the nation set forth to exploit these advantages to the full. Hence disputes with Spain over the Falklands and Vancouver Island, a renewed outburst of oceanic exploration, and the search for the supposed wealthy and populous southern continent – a myth finally dispelled by the voyages of Cook, who pressed south with supreme intrepid daring to the forbidding frozen barriers of the Antarctic. To the East there were abortive attempts during the 'seventies to establish a commercial base in North Borneo, a stepping stone to the expansion of the China trade. For the same purpose Penang was purchased in 1786, and a little later Lord Macartney sent as envoy to Peking: but China, as yet, kept the British at arm's length. During the great wars with France after 1793, the safety of the long trade route to the East was a primary concern of British statesmen, leading to the occupation, and eventual retention at the peace of 1815, of Dutch and French settlements at the Cape, Ceylon and Mauritius.

Ideally an empire of trade involved no more expense or responsibility than the upkeep of a few commercial posts. This was the initial assumption underlying British penetration into India, and it seems at times also to have coloured official views about relations with the native peoples of North America. But an empire of mere trading posts proved untenable in the face of European competition. The pressure from France left the British no choice between withdrawal or the assumption of new territorial commitments. Advance or retreat – these were the alternatives

posed during the Seven Years War, and the victorious peace of 1763 ensured that the advance would be sustained.

In India the war secured primacy for the British East India Company over its French competitors. But at the same time, the involvement of the Company's agents in native politics, partly to win commercial advantage, partly to counter the intrigues of the French, led inevitably to political domination. Step by step, the Company was brought to assume the administration of Bengal, to add to its territories in the presidencies of Bombay and Madras, and to form a network of protectorates and alliances covering the whole of south and central India. Meanwhile British ministries gradually progressed from regarding India merely as a milch cow to accepting responsibility for the good government of the native peoples which the course of events had brought under the Company's rule. Reform owed much to the generous humanitarianism of Edmund Burke, though its practical application owed more to one or two leading government officials and especially to that oft-maligned Scotsman, Henry Dundas. 'The India Act of 1784, with later amending legislation, subjected the Company's administration to some degree of government control, and under the great pro-consuls, Cornwallis, Wellesley, Minto, India began to receive the best that Britain could give. 'Unimpeachable character', declared Dundas, could be 'the only proper ground of recommendation to situations of importance'. Thus began the tradition of the 'White Man's burden', which was to inspire so much of British imperial enterprise in the following century.

Similarly, in North America, the close of the Seven Years War brought the British new responsibilities in an enormous area peopled by a few thousand French settlers and unnumbered Red Indians. The double task of grappling with this problem and with the financial disorder produced by the war, led to one great reverse in the onward march of empire which many contemporaries regarded as an irretrievable disaster – the loss of the thirteen 'old' North American colonies. For long afterwards the history of the British part in this great crisis was written from a 'Whig' tradi-

tion, of which the basic texts were the fulminations of Edmund Burke and the letters and memoirs of Horace Walpole – and the Americans were represented as the active champions and saviours of the constitutional liberties won in 1689, menaced after 1761 by the high monarchical pretensions of George III. This tradition was a travesty of the facts. Politically and economically the old colonies had grown to maturity, and the removal of the French from Canada relieved them of any sense of dependence upon Great Britain, giving free rein to the nascent sense of nationhood which almost every fibre of their existence had helped to foster. The root cause of the American Revolution was the determination of British governments to restrain within the old, traditional framework of colonial organization a great association of communities which had largely outgrown it. A series of administrative and legislative measures followed hard upon the peace of 1763 – the tightening up of the revenue services, the imposition of new restraints upon trade, direct taxation by the Stamp Act of 1765, indirect taxation by the Revenue Act of 1767, the establishment of a colonial board of Commissioners of Customs, the strengthening in 1768 of the system of vice-Admiralty courts in order to enforce observance of the laws made at Westminster. Vacillation in the application of this policy from time to time in face of spontaneous resistance – the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766 and the modification of the Revenue Act in 1770 – were rightly construed by the colonists as signs of weakness, and encouraged resistance. For resistance was immediate and widespread. At bottom, the demand of the Americans was for free and equal association within the empire. In 1765 Governor Bernard of Massachusetts observed: 'In Britain the American governments are considered as corporations, empowered to make bye-laws, existing only during the pleasure of parliament. . . . In America, they claim . . . to be perfect states, no otherwise dependent upon Great Britain than by having the same king.' That most eminent of Americans, Benjamin Franklin, stated, in a letter to his son, the view that the British Empire was not a single state but comprehended many: 'The

King, with their respective parliaments, is their only legislator.' In our own days such a conception has become an accepted commonplace. But two centuries ago it was entirely unacceptable to British statesmen. For them the constitutional unity of the empire, manifested by the legislative supremacy of parliament throughout all its parts, had become an unquestioned axiom, alike for economic and for political reasons. The King reflected a general opinion when he declared in 1775: 'America must be a colony of England or treated as an enemy. Distant possessions standing upon an equality with the superior state is more ruinous than being deprived of such connections.' It is against this background of conflicting principles, clashing economic interests, and emotional reactions, that the detailed steps in the quarrel between Britain and America find their true context. Regulation provoked disobedience, attempts at enforcement provoked disorder; finally conflicting claims to legislative sovereignty were put to the arbitrament of war. A variety of factors decided the outcome in favour of the Americans: on the British side, a confusion of aim, wavering between suppression and conciliation; consistent under-estimation of the enemy, which halted the mobilization of resources at home and vitiated the conduct of operations in America; apathy and lack of enterprise among the commanders; and, at the last – and this was decisive – inability to keep command of the seas when France and Spain at last intervened to help the Americans: on the American side, their familiarity with local conditions, the extent of their territory, above all, ruthless purpose and superiority of morale, typified by the persecution of the empire loyalists and by the unswerving tenacity of Washington. Britain with a limited army of professionals and mercenaries could never hold down a nation in arms. The Franco-American victory at Yorktown in 1781 forced home this lesson, and by the treaty of Versailles of 1783 Great Britain conceded the independence which she no longer had the power to deny. But the growth of British communities overseas continued. The future dominion of Canada was to grow from the province taken from France in 1763 and from the

older colony of Nova Scotia won from the French half a century before. Migrants flowed in both from Britain and – in the considerable numbers of the empire loyalists – from the territories of the newly-established United States. By the end of the Napoleonic Wars the population of British North America was already well over half a million. Australia, from 1788, played the humbler role of a home for convict settlements, though free settlers were beginning to arrive by 1815.

Ireland set another problem which was never satisfactorily solved. Economically it stood as the most important subordinate unit in the British Empire, regulated, like other parts of the Empire, for Britain's benefit. During the American War, encouraged by American example, an Irish national movement, led by the gentry, the merchants and the professional class, pressed for and largely secured the removal of commercial restrictions and the grant of equal constitutional status. But the Irish executive still remained responsible not to the Irish nation and parliament but to the British government. Still worse, the religious animosities which had been sunk during the early nationalist agitation of the 'seventies soon reappeared to embitter the political scene. In a country with an overwhelming Catholic majority a small episcopal Protestant minority continued to monopolize control of power and patronage. The demands of the Irish Catholics for full political enfranchisement were stubbornly resisted by a die-hard Protestant group in power at Dublin, and discontent, stimulated by the impact of the French Revolution, soon reached the verge of rebellion. In 1800 Pitt attempted a solution of legislative union, which was virtually condemned to failure from the start, owing to the veto pronounced by the King and many of Pitt's colleagues against Catholic emancipation and the conflicting interests and aspirations of the two nations thus yoked together.

Britain and the age of revolution

At times, during the 'sixties, the career of John Wilkes caused almost more noise in politics than did America. This squinting demagogue richly

deserved his punishments. But he struck decisive blows for the freedom of the press. After 1771, journalists, printers, and publishers could neither be pursued by secretaries of state employing general warrants nor by the House of Commons arrogantly intent on preserving its privilege of secrecy of debate. Newspapers flourished on the growing appetite for political news, though the press was still, at the turn of the century, a puny stripling in comparison with the giant it was later to become.

Wilkes and America kindled the flame of political radicalism. Thinkers, historians, and doctors of divinity re-scrutinized theories of political obligation and the principles – and legends – of parliamentary representation in England. If the Americans were right in their claim that there should be 'no taxation without representation' – which so eminent a politician as Chatham was prepared to allow – what of the many humble subjects of the King at home who had no real voice, or no part at all, in the choice of representatives? There were not wanting extremists like John Cartwright, who followed this theme to its logical conclusion and plumped for universal male suffrage. Until the French Revolution, and the wide circulation of Tom Paine's *Rights of Man* with its slashing attack on the aristocratic system, radicalism remained the sport of an intellectual minority: it struck no popular roots. After 1789, it began to gather support among both the middle and the lower class. But moderate reformers in general (being propertied men) 'coiled from 'mobocracy' and contented themselves with proposals aimed to diminish the supposedly excessive influence of the executive in parliament. In the search for a stick to beat the ministers, opposition politicians of whatever persuasion could be united in support of the traditional policy of an attack upon placemen: this was the theme of the much vaunted, and also much overrated, schemes of 'economical reform, elaborated by Burke and others, and enacted in 1782. A smaller proportion of the politicians were won over to the idea of minor changes in the representative system, but trial proved that such proposals had little chance of acceptance in parliament, and

after the outbreak of the French Revolution the governing class closed ranks almost unanimously in defence of the established order.

For over twenty years from 1793, the great wars against France absorbed Britain's attention and dominated her politics, damping down the response to pressure for reforms, giving birth to repressive legislation for security reasons, drawing most political groups into active support of the government, leaving only a factious minority in opposition. During the first part of the wars Pitt showed at his worst. He had judged France's strength by the disorder of her finances, expected the early collapse of her military efforts, never comprehended the dynamic violence of the French Revolution or the nationalist upsurge that placed Napoleon at the head of a nation in arms. British war councils were divided. To Pitt the war began as an operation to check French aggression in the Low Countries and maintain the balance of power – a task in which British naval supremacy would be employed to win colonies, some of which might be kept, others used as bargain counters at a peace. To the King, and to many of Pitt's colleagues, the war was a crusade in defence of the civilized order: Toulon and Vendée should be put before the West Indies. In consequence the country's resources were frittered away in various theatres of operations, in no one of which was decisive superiority achieved. Only at sea did Britain hold firm. The moral of the American War was not forgotten. In 1793 Britain at least had the ships, and it was not long before proof was given that she still had men who could direct and operate a fighting machine of superb efficiency. But not until after many years, and after Pitt was dead, did British ministers fully absorb the lesson, that Britain could not expect the continental enemies of France to do all the land fighting but must perfect a large and efficient army and achieve concentration at the opponent's weakest point. In the meantime the navy kept the country secure from invasion and the sea-lanes open, until at last Napoleon committed his fatal blunder, leading the *Grande Armée* to destruction in the Russian snows. England, as Pitt had foretold, had saved Europe by her example, holding

out hope and maintaining a centre of resistance against the most formidable military machine hitherto known.

The mind and spirit of the age

A survey so brief as this of an age so crowded with life and movement can do little more than outline the major themes: justice can hardly be done to the richness of its achievement or to the wealth of talent that treads the stage. The keynote was an exuberant vitality: not for nothing was there some conscious turning back to the Elizabethan past: and that same vitality at work in the growth of commerce and empire can be seen also in the nation's intellectual and cultural life. The work of craftsmen, artists and architects will receive mention in other sections of this work, but reference must be made here to advances in science and to the great literature of the early romantic period. Experiments by such men as Dr Priestley, Joseph Black, Henry Cavendish, John Dalton and Sir Humphrey Davy carried scientific knowledge forward with decisive strides. Dalton's development of the atomic theory placed chemistry at last on the basis of an exact science. Under the direct patronage of George III, Sir William Herschel became a pioneer of sidereal astronomy. On many fronts the work of enquiry went on, stimulating, and deriving advantage from the formation of numerous scientific societies and a growing output of scientific journals. Literary and kindred pursuits displayed, in their own fashion, the same vigorous independence and questing spirit. In prose and in poetry there was revolt against the formal style and artificiality of the earlier eighteenth century. With deliberate, conscious purpose, Wordsworth led the search for simple, natural expression of the deepest human emotions, producing much rubbish in the process, but in the true flights of his genius carrying English poetry forward to long unheard heights of achievement. The literary exuberance of the age appears again in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* and in Sheridan's plays; its robust intellectual confidence

in the works of history and economics from the pens of Edward Gibbon and Adam Smith.

Last, but not least, the Evangelical movement, of which the first springs lay earlier in the century, was broadening and deepening its influence, reaching rich and poor, giving a sense of purpose and Christian mission both to the Church of England and to the sects. Evangelicalism brought back into religious observance and the conduct of daily life the enthusiasm and fervour which the leaders of eighteenth century society had regarded as 'bad form'. In the 'nineties it drew increasing strength from the reaction against the pagan character of the French Revolution. Apart from its general evangelism, it gave a new impetus to the humanitarian movement and stimulated demands for social reforms. An active humanitarianism showed itself in many ways – for instance, in the demand for the reform of the ferocious penal code; and, above all, in the great crusade conducted by Wilberforce and others against slavery and the slave trade, a battle partly won, when, in 1807, the slave trade was made illegal. Another of the fruits of the movement was the establishment of Sunday schools which made more widely available at least the first elements of education: for many years the Sunday schools provided all the education, either religious or secular, which many children received. The legacies of the Evangelical movement were great and lasting. 'Methodism' had an influence far wider than that of the sect which took its name. It was a way of life devoted not only to religious observance but to self-discipline and work for others. As such it was a powerful instrument of social cohesion, impressing upon those who had wealth and power the need to observe their responsibilities no less than it reconciled the poor to the idea that suffering and poverty were part of the natural order. Finally here was to be found the great formative influence moulding the British character for the next three generations, implanting in it a sense of mission and devotion to a stern code of moral behaviour, a strength of fibre and a strength of will.





Coal being loaded on the Tyne. Tail-piece from Thomas Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 2, 1804.



A



B



C



D



E

(A) The Earl of Bute, by Sir James Osmundson. (B) Frederick North, and Earl of Guilford by Nathaniel Dance. (C) King George III, by Thomas Lawrence. (D) William Pitt, and Earl of Chatham, by Sir R. Boscawen. (E) William Pitt the Younger, by J. Hoppner. The National Portrait Gallery.



(a) Pitt addressing the House of Commons, 1793, by R. Andrew Hume. Members include Canning, Willoughby, Montagu, Baskin, Pitt. The National Portrait Gallery.



(b) William Drake, M.P. for Amersham and his family, by J. H. Mortimer (1740-50). House of Commons, Aug., and Philip Taylor.



[a] *Coffee House*, by THOMAS ROWE, after
Henry Adie and Smith, and The Author Penn.



[b] *Portsmouth Harbour*, by THOMAS ROWE, after
The Dutch Museum and The Author Penn.



*Bootham Park. Water colour by James Allan. Drawing, made after his visit to Confluent Valley in 1864.
By Edward Burn and the General Assembly of 1864.*

Architecture

Architecture

CLIFFORD MUSGRAVE

The classical tradition

The reign of King George III saw developments in architecture no less momentous and even more swiftly varying in mood than those of the first half of the eighteenth century. Fashionable society, the *dilettanti*, the connoisseurs and amateurs of the arts were mercurial in their response to rapidly succeeding tendencies of style. Despite the rapid fluctuations of taste, throughout the period different schools or movements flourished independently at the same time, or even intermingled.

The impetus of the Palladian movement initiated by Inigo Jones, and promoted from about 1720 by 'that Apollo of the Arts', Lord Burlington, was to inform architecture to the end of the century and even beyond. By 1760, however, the leaders of the movement, William Kent, Giacomo Leoni, Colin Campbell, and Lord Burlington himself, were dead. For over a decade, architecture in the Burlingtonian tradition had tended increasingly to consist of uninspired applications of the Palladian formula. The perfection of classical form and proportion according to the rules laid down by the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius, and his sixteenth-century disciple Palladio, had been regarded more and more as having declined, in the works of the Burlingtonian followers, into mere 'correctness', purity of style into coldness and monotony.

Before long, fashionable patrons were to welcome the dazzling innovations of the brothers Adam, but the time of distinguished achievements

by upholders of conservative tradition was not entirely past. The two leaders of this school at the middle of the century, Sir Robert Taylor and James Paine, 'nearly divided the practice of the profession between them, for they had little opposition till Robert Adam entered the lists'. So wrote Hardwick in his life of Sir William Chambers. Although their popularity waned somewhat during the meteoric rise of Adam, without departing from scholarly correctness, they rivalled him with the elegance of their interior designs, which derived frequently from sources that the Scottish architect had used.

Little of the work in our period of James Paine (1716-89), is accessible, save the central block and curved connecting corridors of the north front at Kedleston, Derbyshire (1757-61) (Pls. 5B, 8A), where Adam followed him, as he did also at Nostell Priory, Yorks, the building of which Paine had been 'entrusted to conduct' at the age of nineteen in 1735.

Paine's north front at Kedleston is very heavily Palladian, with niches instead of windows behind the columns of the portico. The individual charm and elegance of his style is expressed in the grouping in pairs of the columns and pilasters of the façade of Wardour Castle, Wiltshire (1770-6).

Sir Robert Taylor (1714-88) began his career as a sculptor. The carved pediment at the Mansion House was executed by him in 1744. He soon abandoned this profession for architecture, and before long was appointed Surveyor of the Bank of England, and to other official posts in which he

was able to display his sound scholarly accomplishments.

Taylor's interiors at the Bank of England (now either demolished or reconstructed) were among his loveliest work. No. 37, Dover Street, London (1772). (Pl. 7A), which he built for the Bishop of Ely, shows his great elegance of style in the columns flanking the windows, while the pronounced rustication of the arched ground floor gives firmness of character to the façade. Rusticated arches are also used with impressive effect in Maidenhead Bridge (1772), and the engaged columns appear again on a more monumental scale in the end pavilions of the little known Stone Buildings at Lincoln's Inn (1775), which is truly but austere Palladian, with the main block lacking a central feature, and unrelieved windows.

The most splendid of all his works was Heveningham in Suffolk, c. 1782 (Pls. 9B, 10B), where the interior was magnificently remodelled later by Wyatt. Here Taylor relieved the traditional Palladian severity by enriching the great central block of the north front with an imposing attic having four sculptured figures standing before pilasters, a theme of French origin which a fellow traditionalist, Sir William Chambers, was to use at Somerset House later. The tendency to increased decoration is shown in the heavy festoons and sculptured medallions of the centre block, and in the relief panels with which Taylor adjusted the size of the first floor windows to the scale of the frontage.

A provincial contemporary of Paine and Taylor, and like them a Palladian traditionalist, John Carr of York (1723-1807) achieved a very considerable reputation throughout the north of England. One of his earliest commissions was Harewood House, Yorkshire, but his work there was almost entirely altered by Adam, and later Barry. The whole of the village, however, is by Carr, and his cottages are simple, solid and admirably proportioned. Several houses in York are his, but his masterpiece is the austere graceful Assize Court (1773-7). With its recessed Ionic portico, roof balustrade, the small attics carrying urns, and the sculptured figures, the building combined delicacy with monumental impressiveness. The

Female Debtors' Prison (1780) opposite the Court is also Carr's work, but enlarged by Atkinson in 1803. Carr built the stables at Castle Howard, the Town Halls at Chesterfield and Newark, Nottinghamshire (1776), and the graceful Royal Crescent at Buxton (1779-84).

The stupendous Palladian achievement of the Royal Crescent at Bath built from 1767 to 1775 by John Wood, the younger (1728-81), must be regarded as belonging to the school of traditional classicism. The great sweep of the Crescent contains 114 gigantic Ionic columns with the angular Roman volutes which Adam disliked. The Crescent is the culmination of the work of the Woods in Bath, and inspired the building of Royal Crescents in other towns such as Buxton and Brighton.

In domestic architecture the Palladian ideal found expression more easily in large houses, or in great monumental street compositions with a number of houses combined in a single palatial unit, than in the restricted scope of the small house.

Up to the time of Adam, the 'Wren' house, of red brick with a steep tiled roof and dormer windows, had remained the standard of vernacular building, with Palladian details of porch, pediment and modillion cornice applied according to the means of the owner. In the middle century, plaster walls had taken the place of pine panelling, but in small houses plaster decoration rarely approached the rococo elaboration of the great mansions, and was usually confined to a moulded cornice and possibly some enrichment in the shape of a 'tabernacle frame' above the chimneypiece. The lighter mouldings and stucco ornaments of the Adam brothers, and to some extent also of Taylor and Chambers, lent themselves more readily to use in small houses.

An invigorating influence in the development of traditional classical architecture was the growing conviction that the 'true style of the ancients' was to be found in the buildings of ancient Rome, rather than in the work of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian architects which inspired the Burlingtonians. Two books published by Robert Wood on the buildings of the Roman Empire, *The Ruins of Palmyra* in 1753 and *The*

Ruins of Balbec in 1757, were early contributions in this country to the neo-classical movement. They were followed in 1764 by the folio which recorded a visit to Spalato in Dalmatia by Robert Adam during his studies in Italy several years earlier, *The Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro* (see Pl. 93A).

All through the years of Robert Adam's fashionable supremacy, an official architect, Sir William Chambers (1723-96), maintained his leadership of the traditional school. Surveyor-General (1782) and first Treasurer of the Royal Academy, he was Adam's greatest rival and critic. Two of his works lie at extremes of scale. One is the delightful Casino at Marino, Dublin (1761). Despite its smallness, there are monumental qualities in the beautifully balanced harmony of Doric columns, pedimented doors, and ornament of sculptured urns and figures. The other work, Chamber's masterpiece, is Somerset House (1776), one of the grandest compositions of its time. The Strand front, with its Corinthian façade and sculptured figures, displays the influence of French architecture. The great quadrangle is given impressiveness by the central Corinthian features upon each side. Upon the embankment side the extended composition is broken up by three principal features, the two on either side being the most beautiful of the whole work. They take the form of Palladian bridges built on water-gates over rusticated Doric archways. The river front was completed to the original design by Sir Robert Smirke in 1830, and the west façade was built by Sir James Pennethorne in 1856: a skilful addition which is not conspicuously out of harmony with the original composition.

As an official architect, Chambers built few houses, but Asgill House, Richmond, is a distinguished example of his style.

Chambers advocated purity of style and masculine qualities of design. His power of majestic composition was combined with a sense of grace and beauty in decorative detail, acquired during his studies in Italy and France, of a kind regarded in conservative circles as being less facile and evanescent than the frivolous style of the Adam brothers. His great treatise on *The Decorative*

Part of Civil Architecture, published in 1759, became the standard authority upon classical design, and was being republished even as late as 1862. It was probably due to the corrective influence of Chambers at the time of the Adam brothers that the work of the succeeding period developed in a sound and satisfying manner.

The Adam revolution

When Robert Adam returned in 1758 from four years' study in Italy it was to a world of fashionable patrons eager for the innovations in architecture and decoration which he offered them.

Robert Adam (1728-92) was the second of the four sons of a successful Scottish architect, William Adam (1689-1748). The most important of the houses he built was Hopetoun, which occupied him until his death, when it was completed by Robert.

The style which Robert Adam, and later his brother James, acquired in Rome was an eclectic one, compounded from various sources, from Roman and Greek buildings of the classical period, the Roman architecture of the Renaissance, the painted 'grotesque' decorations imitated by Raphael and his pupils from classical originals in the loggias of the Vatican and the Villa Madama, and the arabesque decorations of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

The innovations which they introduced lay not so much in the characteristic ornament of the Adam style, the festoons of husks, the swags, the garlands, the vases, urns, tripods and gryphons, the arabesques and scrolls - many of these motifs had been used by other architects - but in the highly personal refinement and delicacy which Robert Adam gave them, the lighter proportion of the elements of a design to the space containing them contrasting with the heavier treatment of earlier times. When in 1773 the brothers Adam published the designs of their principal achievements in *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam, Esquires*, they spoke of the 'almost total change' they had effected. While they decried the 'ponderous compartment ceiling' of earlier times,



Fig 1 Latton Hoo, Bedfordshire Built by Robert Adam, c 1768-75, the interior was entirely remodelled after a fire It houses one of the most important collections of art treasures in the country In 1816 Robert Smirke replaced Adam's delicate bow-shaped portico with a heavier rectangular pedimented entry From Jones' *Views of the Seats of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of England, etc*, 1829

hey did not abjure it entirely, but only those of he 'most enormous weight and depth' of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In the half-domed apses of Adam's entrance halls and dining-rooms, and in the drawing-rooms and alcoves of Syon (Pl. 6), Kedleston (Pls. 5A, 8A) and Osterley (Pl. 12A), and other houses, are to be seen beautiful examples of these forms, with square, circular, lozenge and octagonal panels or *aissoms*.

Robert Adam's fame is shared with his collaborators. Joseph Rose, the creator of his plaster ceilings, trophies of arms and other decorations, was one of the greatest artists in stucco of any country or age.

The painted panels, roundels and medallions depicting somewhat primly elegant scenes from an idealized world of classical mythology, which are found in Adam's interiors, are mostly from the hands of Angelica Kauffmann (1741-1807), an Academician at the age of twenty-six, and her husband Antonio Zucchi.

One of Adam's earliest works was the Admiralty archway (1759) which expressed that talent for monumental design which he always believed was his especial *métier*. With this screen of Doric columns, decorated with charming sculptures by Michael Spang, Adam successfully corrected the faulty composition of Thomas Ripley's dull Palladian Admiralty building of 1724, with its excessively projecting wings.

The interiors at Hopetoun, where Robert worked before visiting Rome, is in the prevailing rococo style of the mid-century, but in the acanthusscrolling of his gilded friezes there is to be seen the precursor, on a bolder scale, of the 'flowing rinceau' or branched ornament which is one of Adam's favourite motifs. The magnificent ball-room has a handsome Venetian window, but with the typically Palladian angular volutes to the Ionic capitals which he was later to abhor. This type of window, with arched central portion and two side-lights, appears in almost all of Adam's frontages, and is seen at its loveliest, with columns of pink alabaster, in the state dining room at Kedleston.

Adam's new style is shown in a robust and

vigorous form at Hatchlands, Surrey (1758-61), especially in the dining-room ceiling and the sculptured fireplace, but the bay-leaf frieze and ceiling mouldings of the staircase hall still have a hint of early Georgian heaviness.

Harewood, where Adam worked from 1759 to 1769, completing and transforming the work of Thomas Carr of York, was the first of Adam's palatial houses. It is famous for his early collaboration, as at Nostell Priory, Kenwood, and other houses, with Thomas Chippendale, who provided the magnificent furniture almost certainly to Adam's designs.

An important aspect in Adam's system of design was the planning of rooms to obtain dramatic variety of scenic effect, with varying geometrical shapes in successive rooms, in the manner of the ancients. He preferred to make a room octagonal or circular rather than square, and oblong rooms were diversified by apses and recesses (*exedrae*). Relief was given also by changes of colour, tone and texture, in order to express the character and purpose of different rooms. Dining-rooms were usually given painted and stuccoed walls instead of textile hangings which might retain the smell of food.

Adam's conception of classical planning was intended in his great palatial houses to serve the 'parade, the convenience, and the social pleasures of life', and it is seen in its most majestic form at houses like Syon and Kedleston. But it applied also to the smaller houses built by himself and his followers, where each room was given its distinctive character.

At Syon the varying levels of the old house aided Adam's planning for scenic variety. The ante-room there is one of the most glorious rooms in England, with its twelve immense columns of verd-antico marble, dredged from the Tiber, surmounted by life-size gilded statues, and gilded trophies by Joseph Rose. The state dining-room is one of Adam's finest and most characteristic, with its arched recesses, apses and half-domes and columnar screens, a noble fireplace, and a ceiling of the best early flat type, with the famous 'flowing rinceau' in the frieze. The excessive length which Adam found in the Jacobean long gallery

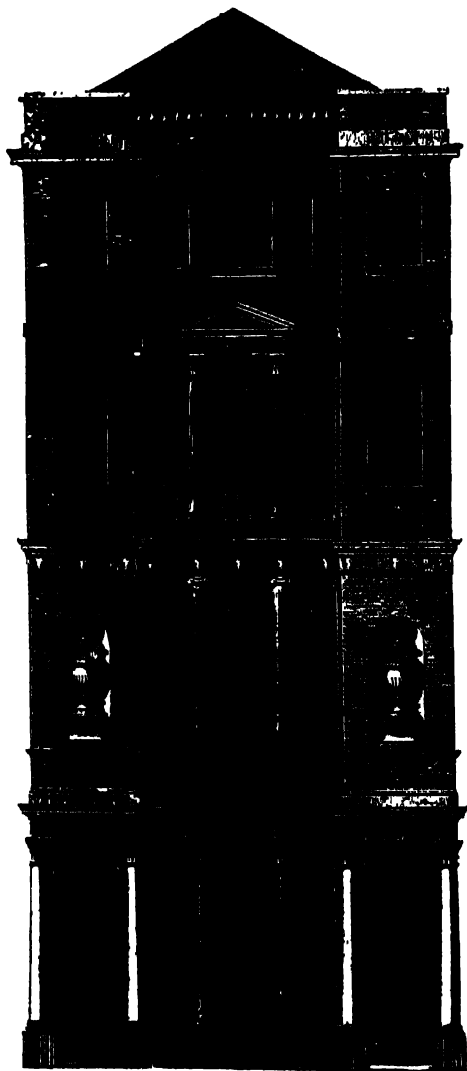


Fig. 2. The British Coffee House, Cockspur Street, London S W 1. Built by Robert Adam 1770, demolished 1886. Decorative richness in a narrow town exterior. From *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam*, 1773.

he remedied by dividing the room into five units of three doors and two fireplaces, and by leading the eye outwards towards the walls by the recessed geometrical figures of the ceiling ribs. With its soft pink and green colouring, and small scale of ornament, the gallery was intended to afford 'great variety and amusement' to the ladies of the household, and a contrast to the more vivid splendours of the state drawing-room.

Robert Adam's reputation survives chiefly as an interior architect, but at Kedleston, where he completed work begun by Paine in the most severe Burlingtonian manner, he created an impressive example of that baroque quality of 'movement' which he admired in the work of Vanbrugh, and strove to restore. By 'movement' he intended 'the rise and fall, the advance and recess within the diversity of form in different parts of the building'. This quality of depth, of three-dimensional architecture, Adam expressed in his splendid south front at Kedleston by his use of the Roman triumphal arch theme with projecting entablature and disengaged columns, and by contrasting the convex curve of the dome with the superb concave sweep of the double flight of entrance steps (Pl. 5B).

The marble hall at Kedleston, with its twenty immense monolithic Corinthian columns of Nottinghamshire alabaster, rivals the ante-room at Syon in splendour. The contrast between this hall and the great domed saloon is one of the most striking examples of Adam's dramatic planning. The saloon rises half as high again as the hall, with a dome coffered with octagonal panels.

At Osterley, Middlesex, Adam gave dignity to an existing Elizabethan house by adding a magnificent Ionic portico. Begun in 1761, but not finished until 1780, his early and middle styles are revealed in an enchanting succession of beautiful rooms. The entrance hall is of the customary Doric order, and has coffered apses in his early style. In the library the fireplace and bookcases have ornament of the small scale which, in his middle period, tended to fussiness, but here the effect is of a restful softness of texture as in the gallery at Syon. The drawing-room (1773), praised by Walpole, has a ceiling of early character

coffered with octagons, and an astonishingly beautiful central oval with long radiating leaves, adapted from a ceiling in the Temple of the Sun at Palmyra. This ceiling design was used also at Woburn by Flitcroft, and in West Wycombe Church. The three following rooms are of later date, and looking through the vista from the gallery, the increasingly diminishing scale of Adam's ornament with the years is seen in the decoration of the successive doorcases.

Adam's planning for scenic variety and contrast in his rooms is seen on a smaller and more domestic scale in the beautiful tapestry room, dining-room and library at Newby, Yorkshire. Begun in 1767, though not completed until 1785, or even later, the spirit of the interior is of his early phase, and the house has many affinities with Osterley and Kenwood. The sculpture gallery, with its coffered domes and stucco ornament, reflects the influence of the Catacombs and of Herculaneum, but its beauty is cold and static, for unlike Adam's libraries and dining-rooms, it has not become part of the instinctive life of its users.

Kenwood (1767-9) marks the culmination of Adam's first period, and embodies in the Great Library one of his masterpieces (Pl. 9A). Here his use of apses is carried to a glorious climax, their semicircles joining with those of their half-domes, with the arches of the bookcase recesses, and with the vault of the ceiling. The entablature, carried across the apses upon the Corinthian columns and pilasters of the screens, forms the stable rectangle which holds these curves in tension.

The following decade, from 1770 to 1780, saw the creation of the famous London house interiors, such as Chandos House, Home House, Portman Square (now the Courtauld Institute), and 20, St James's Square. In the first of these Adam indulged on a small scale his genius for varied internal planning, but in the decoration began to depart from his early robust manner in favour of a more superficial and linear design. In the exteriors of these houses too, the treatment is lacking in relief.

Home House (built 1775-7) is one of the most elaborately superb town interiors in existence yet it marks the distinctive moment of change

in Adam's decorative work to a completely flat and geometrical scheme of ornament. The virtuosity of the decoration is breathtaking in its mathematical complexities, but after this date there will be little of his subtle judgment in the relationship of forms to space, and instead a tendency to fill every void with facile and meaningless ornament. It was such over-elaboration which caused Horace Walpole to speak of Adam's ornament as 'larded and embroidered and pomponned with shreds and remnants, and *clinguant* like all the harlequinades of Adam, which never let the eye repose a moment'.

At Nostell Priory, Yorkshire, Robert Adam made additions to the house built by James Paine between 1735 and 1750. Adam's interiors here are among the loveliest of his middle period, especially the salon and hall, the latter containing a skilfully conceived apse to give drama to an otherwise uninterestingly square room.

In his Scottish castles Robert Adam developed some of his youthful romantic imaginings. Mellerstain, Berwickshire (1770-8), is a romantic battlemented house, with enchanting interiors. The library, with its ceiling panels painted by Zucchi and its stucco relief panels, is one of his most superb rooms (Pl. 12B). The dining-room also has a beautiful ceiling of his best middle period. Culzean Castle, Ayrshire (1777-90), is Adam's most picturesque building, with battlemented towers, and an exceptionally fine oval staircase hall.

Bradwell Lodge, Essex, is a highly characteristic small house, with its delicate staircase, the marble mantelpiece with a frieze attributed to Angelica Kauffmann, and blue and white plaster reliefs.

In the years from 1780 to his death in 1792 Robert Adam turned to town-planning schemes and public buildings, striving to realize his ambition to create works of great monumental quality. In all these projects he was denied the fulfilment of seeing them completed, but all show a return to his early three-dimensional exterior design, and some of them, such as the National Register House (1774-92) of Edinburgh, and the University there (1789-91), serve as true memorials to the architect's greatness.

In his designs for Fitzroy Square and Portland Place, London, and Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, Robert Adam carried forward the Palladian ideal of unified town-planning embodied in the work of the Woods at Bath. James Adam was chiefly responsible for Portland Place, of which only a few houses remain, including Nos. 37, 46 and 48, distinguished by pairs of front doors combined under a single arch, anthemion decoration and sculptured plaques.

From the publication of the *Works* in 1773 onwards, the diffusion of the Adam brothers' distinctive style throughout the land became irresistible and limitless. The 'electric power of that revolution in art' which they effected, to use the words of Soane, ran through the whole field of design concerned with houses. A host of design-books placed the Adam repertoire of ornament in the hands of architects, builders, decorators, merchants and craftsmen of every kind. In many towns of these islands, the brothers Adam or a follower of theirs created pleasing expressions of the new outlook, especially in the form of assembly-rooms and ballrooms like those of Crunden and Goulden at Brighton, of Baldwin at Bath, and at Shrewsbury and Bury St Edmunds, which reflected the new and gracious phase which had been reached in the evolution of social intercourse.

The Adam manner, with its light mouldings and delicacy of plaster decoration, was more readily modified to the needs of small houses and for cheapness than the heavier or more complicated rococo plaster ornament of the Palladian fashion, and the new style quickly penetrated throughout all classes of domestic building. Even the Venetian window could be used in the simplified and inexpensive form of a round-headed central window with two narrow lights at the side, without columns or pilasters, but within an arched recess.

Many of the criticisms of the Adam manner resulted from the use of patent stuccos and compositions which enabled his designs to be mass-produced by innumerable imitators, with a consequent degradation of the style and a loss of its true character.

Of all the Adam followers, Thomas Leverton (1743-1824) was perhaps the greatest. His work is chiefly to be seen in Bedford Square, where each side has a pleasant central feature, and there are in some of the houses rooms of very great delicacy and charm. No. 1 has his characteristic shallow arches and a flat saucer-dome (Pl. 7a). No. 13 was the architect's own house.

Thomas Baldwin (1750-1820) was responsible for many of the most attractive buildings of the late eighteenth century in Bath. Great Pulteney Street, in particular, has the grace and dignity of Adam's finest street compositions, and his ballroom at the Guildhall (1775-6) is one of the most magnificent in the Adam manner.

John Crunden (1740-c.1828) is famous chiefly for Boodle's Club, St James's Street, London (1775), a charming design with a beautiful central feature of a Venetian window within a recess with a fluted tympanum. He also built the ballroom of the Castle Inn, Brighton (1776), which eventually became King George IV's Chapel Royal. This was afterwards demolished and re-erected as St Stephen's Church, Montpelier Street, Brighton, and is still worth visiting for the sake of the elegant details of its interior, such as Adam's favourite motif of a simple Corinthian capital from the Tower of the Winds at Athens.

Experiments in the picturesque

Aspirations towards classical purity were paralleled by the yearnings of romanticism. The cult of the Picturesque, which had brought about the revolution in landscape gardening effected by 'Capability' Brown and Humphrey Repton, created an interest in rural cottages, lodges, dairies, and farmhouses, which from about 1790 onwards became widespread through the publication of innumerable books of designs, by such architects as Charles Middleton, John Flaw, James Malton, and in his early years, by John Soane.

Blaise Hamlet, Gloucestershire, a village designed by the Regency architect John Nash, early in his career, in 1809, provides perfect examples of picturesque *cottages ornés*, with delightful variations of thatched and tiled roofs, gables, verandahs and porches.

Chinese pagodas, temples and summer-houses had been popular as picturesque features in the new 'irregular' park landscape since before the middle of the century. Sir William Chambers had travelled to China as a young man, and published his famous volume of *Designs for Chinese Buildings* in 1757, with the expressed intention of correcting the absurdities which had developed in the vogue for Chinese furniture, decoration, and garden buildings during the previous years. About the same time, while serving as architectural tutor to the Prince of Wales, who was in 1760 to become King George III, he was employed by the Dowager Princess Augusta to lay out the grounds at Kew Palace. Chambers embellished the gardens with pavilions, temples and other fantastic structures which are described in his book of 1763, *The Gardens and Buildings at Kew in Surrey*.

It is interesting to conjecture how much these buildings, several of them oriental, may have stirred the imagination of the new Prince of Wales, George Frederick, son of King George III, throughout the years of his childhood spent at Kew Palace, and inspired the oriental fantasies he was eventually himself to create.

The most important of the Kew buildings was the Chinese Pagoda, of ten stories, 160 feet high. Originally, on the angles of the roofing at each stage crouched guardian dragons holding bells in their mouths. They were covered with layers of multi-coloured glass, producing dazzling reflections in the sunlight. Eventually they disappeared, but the Pagoda still stands, brightly painted in red and blue, so impressive a landmark that Horace Walpole pretended that it could be seen from Yorkshire.

In 1784 the young Prince of Wales set up a marine residence at Brighton, in a 'respectable farmhouse', which Henry Holland was commissioned to rebuild in 1787 as a simple and elegant 'Graeco-Roman' villa, with a shallow domed rotunda and Ionic colonnade. Not long after, in 1801, Holland's assistant, P. F. Robinson, an architect of Picturesque country houses, made it more of a *cottage orné* with such typical features as verandahs, and shell-shaped canopies to the balconies, which from about that time came into

fashion and are now regarded as charmingly distinctive of the smaller houses of the period, especially at the seaside.

The interior of this first 'Marine Pavilion' at Brighton was originally in the restrained classical manner of Henry Holland, though painted in gay colours of 'French-blue', bright yellow, maroon, and with ceilings of grey and white. At the time of Robinson's alterations the Prince of Wales had the whole of the rooms altered to a Chinese scheme of decoration, which the interior of the Pavilion, although later enlarged, has retained ever since. The rooms were decorated with Chinese wallpapers, porcelain, and furniture of bamboo and lacquer.

Unlike the reticent *chinoiserie* interiors of the 1750's and 'sixties, every detail, mouldings, fireplaces, doorways, was in the Chinese manner. Many reasons have been suggested for this revival in astonishing exuberance of the Chinese vogue, which had been in something of a decline, but it is possible that the Prince of Wales had found Henry Holland's rather primly simplified Adam style insufficiently gay for a holiday palace. Most of the State Apartments at the Royal Pavilion today have the magnificence which was given in later transformations of the building, but several rooms still retain the lively and barbarically colourful character of the first Chinese interior.

In 1803, William Porden (c.1755-1822), a pupil of James Wyatt, and who was then building Eaton Hall in Cheshire, with gothic tracery of cast-iron, was commissioned by the Prince to design a Royal Stables and Riding House at Brighton. They remain today, the Stables now a concert and conference hall called 'The Dome, the Riding House a banqueting and exhibition hall.

The exteriors are little changed, and form one of the most impressive architectural compositions in England. The style was not Chinese, but Indian, for the trend of romantic interest had switched away from China to that newly developed sub-continent, whose dazzling marble mosques and palaces seemed to offer rich new possibilities for Picturesque architecture.

The Indian interest was largely inspired by the drawings and aquatints of Indian buildings made

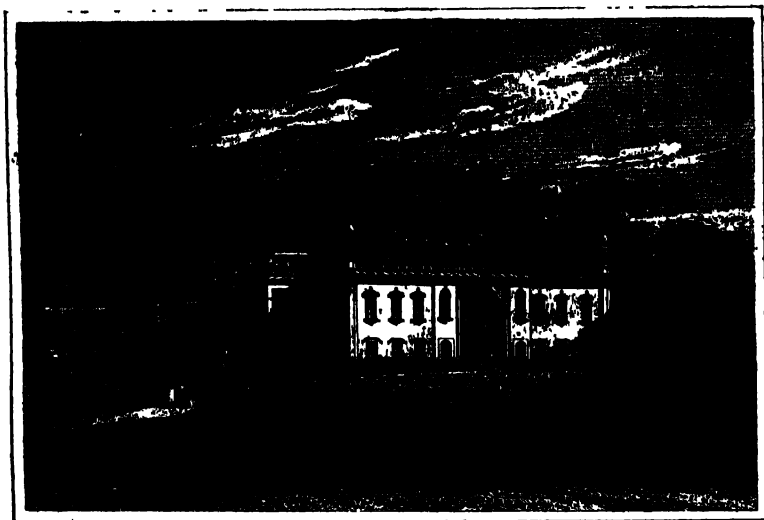


Fig. 3. Sezincote, Gloucestershire, by S. P. Cockerell, c. 1805. Indian architecture in an English setting, which inspired Humphrey Repton's designs (not executed) for rebuilding the Brighton Pavilion in Indian style. From Jones' *Views of the Seats of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of England, etc.*, 1829.

by Thomas and William Daniell in India a few years earlier. At that moment the Daniells were in fact working at Sezincote in Gloucestershire, which was then being built in the Indian style for a retired nabob by S. P. Cockerell (1754-1827) (Fig. 3). Humphrey Repton, the landscape architect, was also at Sezincote laying out the grounds, and in 1805 he was called from there to Brighton to design an extension for the pavilion in the Indian manner to accord with the new stables.

Repton's designs are reminiscent of Sezincote, with its single bulbous dome and scalloped Saracenic arches, but the Prince was overwhelmed by financial difficulties and the scheme was never carried out.

The final transformation of the Pavilion as an Indian palace by John Nash belongs to the flowering of the Picturesque movement in the time of the Regency, and must be left to the later volume dealing with that period.

Sezincote stands today, a dreamy Indian palace of honey-coloured stone, with a little Indian temple, fountain and bridge, in the wooded park which remains as Humphrey Repton planned it.

Graeco-Roman elegance

Robert Wood's two folios, *The Ruins of Palmyra* and *The Ruins of Balbec*, became prominent landmarks in the battle of the books which was waged over the relative merits of Roman and Greek architecture when the German scholar Winckelmann published his treatise on *The Imitation of Greek Works of Art* in 1755. The Roman architect Piranesi, in his earlier volumes, strove to demonstrate the unsurpassable glories of Roman architecture, but in his later works admitted the existence, and eventually the superiority, of the Greek.

The victory of the Greek style throughout Europe was consolidated by the publication over

many years from 1762 onwards of the four volumes of *The Antiquities of Athens* by James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, 'painters and architects'. The first of these authors immediately became the recognized authority upon the pure Greek style. He was nicknamed 'Athenian' Stuart and received a number of important commissions. Eventually, however, his drunken habits and unreliable business methods caused his never very extensive practice to dwindle away.

His Doric Temple at Hagley Park, Worcestershire (1758), a copy of the Temple of Theseus at Athens, is the earliest neo-Greek building in this country.

Although Shugborough, Staffordshire (1764-88), is not frequently accessible, it must be cited for the important work of Stuart's it contains, both in the house and park. In the latter there are copies of the Tower of the Winds and the Choragic Monument of Lysikrates at Athens, and a Doric Temple similar to the one at Hagley. Few others of his important works survive, save 15, St James's Square, London, an early expression of Greek Ionic, with caryatids copied from the Temple of Minerva, and the interior of the Chapel at Greenwich Hospital (1779-88). If the design is wholly Stuart's, and not partly by his assistant William Newton, the Chapel is Stuart's masterpiece, a glorious achievement with a lovely organ gallery with Ionic columns, and a superb ceiling of shallow vaulting. The astonishing church at Newnham Courtenay, Oxfordshire, where Stuart 'corrected' his patron's design, has another very graceful Ionic portico (to a blind wall) and a remarkable dome.

Robert Adam was a close friend of Stuart's, and absorbed a great deal of Grecian detail from the *Antiquities* into his own work. Indeed, Adam derived more from Stuart's book than from his own *Spalatro*: for example, the very charming and graceful capital from the Tower of the Winds consisting of an inverted bell covered with long smooth leaves, and a single row of curling acanthus leaves round the base. This and many other details of the buildings of Athens informed not only the work of Adam, but of the Wyatts,

Holland, and later, Nash, and the host of architects of the Greek Revival of the first four decades of the nineteenth century.

Nicholas Revett (1720-1804) practised but little, and left even fewer architectural works. At West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire, Revett built the stately Ionic west portico (1771), and in the park a delightful version of the Tower of the Winds, a Temple of Flora, and a Temple of Music (1778-80).

Revett's famous church at Ayot St Lawrence is a somewhat coldly beautiful composition with flanking colonnades and small pavilions, recalling the Palladian fashion, but the details are Greek, and the Doric columns with recessed cap and base derive from the Temple of Apollo at Delos. The interior is most striking in an austere way, with large vaulted window openings, domed apse and ceiling, and simple recessed ornament, but its antecedents appear to be the Roman basilicas rather than the temples of Greece. It is an interior that anticipates the domed halls and arches of Soane.

The small number of surviving buildings by George Dance, junior (1741-1825), reveal little of the profound and far-reaching influence he exercised upon architecture, especially upon the work of his more famous pupil Soane, and eventually through him upon that of Smirke, Wilkins and Nash, and thus upon the great monuments of the later Greek revival.

One of his gifts was his ability to create dramatic effects without the use of columns, pilasters and other features of the classical orders, a characteristic which was later to become distinctive in the work of Soane, Henry Holland and James Wyatt. His style possessed a simple virile quality which derived from the Egyptian designs of Piranesi, and from neo-classical motifs which were predominant in French architecture at the time, such as pediments with acroteria, or corner ornaments.

His masterpiece, Newgate Prison, no longer exists, but the Bank of England Printing Works, Old Street, London, shows something of his dramatic power. In the houses on the north side of Finsbury Square, London (1777), can be seen the

graceful shallow arches above windows that proclaim his work, and the south front of the Guildhall which he rebuilt (1785) is an essay of his in the playful unscholarly Gothic of the eighteenth century.

While the Adam brothers were at the height of their fame, James Wyatt (1747-1813), a young architect who had returned from his studies in Rome in 1768, astonished the world of taste with a sensational design for rebuilding the Pantheon assembly rooms (demolished in 1922) which he carried out in 1772 at the age of 25. Henceforth Wyatt never lacked fashionable and wealthy patrons. When Chambers died in 1796, Wyatt was appointed in his place as Surveyor-General and occupied it until his death in 1813.

In 1776 Wyatt was called to Oxford to complete the Radcliffe Observatory which was left unfinished at the death of its designer Henry Keene. Keene (1726-76) was a minor architect who did much work of Gothic character in Oxford and elsewhere. The Saloon at Arbury, Warwickshire (1762-90), is a charming example of his Gothic style, and ranks as a considerable work of Georgian Gothic with Strawberry Hill and Lacock. Wyatt gave the design for the Observatory 'a distinction and originality of treatment altogether beyond the powers' of his predecessor. The octagonal tower is based on the Tower of the Winds, but the whole structure, with its graceful Ionic pilasters, pedimented windows and porch, has a charm that is distinctively Wyatt's (Fig. 4).

The over-elaboration and tendency to fussiness of Adam's interior designs during his middle period caused many patrons to turn their attentions elsewhere. Wyatt, with his adaptability and command of a wide range of styles, was able to make a virtue of the simplicity, within the general spirit of Adam design, which clients were now seeking. In his later life, Wyatt confided to his master, King George III, that 'on returning from Rome, he found public taste corrupted by the Adams, and he was obliged to comply with it', but early in his career he was able to create a formula which offered a relief from the less pleasing aspects of their style.

James Wyatt opposed the Palladian tradition and expressed the growing impulse towards simplicity by making very restrained external use of the classical orders, and designing his porticos with the columns rising direct from a pavement at ground level or with a few steps only instead of from a high podium. Frequently he used a simple balustrade instead of an elaborate pediment and dispensed with an attic storey. He greatly reduced external ornament, but gave an effect of repose and stability by horizontal bands or string courses at the levels of the various floors. Wyatt also gave interest to the simplified mass of his buildings by the use of bow-fronted wings, sometimes crowned by domes, and by bowed window-bays rising through two or more stories.

Wyatt's south front at Heaton Hall, Manchester (1772), has a restrained severe beauty, with its semi-circular central bay flanked by recessed Venetian windows, and colonnaded loggias linking it with octagonal end pavilions. The rooms show the inspiration derived by Wyatt from the brothers Adam, who indeed in their *Works* accused him of plagiarism, but generally the interior has a chaste simplicity and refinement of character that is a rarification of the brothers' style.

Heveningham Hall, Suffolk (c.1772-4), is Wyatt's interior masterpiece, remarkable for the completeness and unity of the decorative scheme and for the superb quality of detail, equalling that of Syon and Kedleston. The rooms have an entrancing, serene loveliness; the Hall with exquisite fan-vaulting in the barrel ceiling; the saloon with a shallow vault and domed apses with recesses in them. The Etruscan Room is one of the most engaging of the several ventures in this manner. These beautiful rooms, mostly with painted decorations by Biagio Rebecca, stand as the most glorious achievement of the modified Adam inspiration (Pl. 92).

Whoever was the architect of Rudding Park, near Harrogate (1805), it is a most refined and beautiful example of the mature Wyatt manner, with its bowed windows rising through two stories, and its rich yet restrained interior. The lovely silk-hung yellow drawing-room illustrates his simplification of the Adam style in its ceiling of



Fig 4 The Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford, by James Wyatt, 1776

concentric circles without the Adamitic infilling of ornament. In the planning of the house, devised to admit the sun throughout the day, it anticipates the functional lay-out aimed at by Regency architects. The Doric portico and balustrade resembles the south front at Heaton, and repeats on a smaller scale elements in James Wyatt's entrance at Goodwood, Sussex (1780), where the portico is of superimposed orders of Doric and Ionic with a balustrade, and his bowed features appear now as angle towers.

Castlecoole, Fermanagh, Ireland (1790-97), and Buscot Park, Berkshire (1780), are also pleasant examples of his style.

The legendary medieval world which was recreated with delicate rococo fancy at Lacock and Strawberry Hill in the mid-century, increasingly enthralled the imagination of clients and architects. James Wyatt's Gothic creations embodied scholarship as well as charm, and were interposed between his periods of classical building.

Ashridge is the principal existing example of these Gothic exercises, but is rarely accessible. Fonthill Abbey, in Wiltshire, Wyatt's stupendous Gothic fantasy, has vanished. So, too, has the most exquisite of his Gothic creations, Lee Priory – the 'true child of Strawberry' – with its graceful fan vaulting, but the fittings from one room there have been saved for re-erection at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

James Wyatt was the greatest of a widely ranging family of architects of that name who mostly perpetuated the style he had developed. His significance is that he simplified the refined neo-classical system of design introduced by the Adam brothers, and established a distinctive style of unaffected grace in place of Palladian pompousness.

George Steuart (c. 1740-1806) was a minor architect (not to be confused with 'Athenian' Stuart) who left two buildings of note. Attingham, near Shrewsbury (1783) (Pl. 11A), is basically Palladian in design with its columned portico

and curved flanking colonnades to side pavilions, but it illustrates the reaction from Palladian pomposity in the way the basement story has become lowered so that the pavement of the portico is only a few steps above the ground. This has the result of increasing the height of the portico, its tall Ionic columns giving an impression of great elegance. This effect, which is fully developed in the work of James and Samuel Wyatt, is to be found also in the buildings of Henry Holland and Sir John Soane of a later date. Steuart's interiors at Attingham bear a strong resemblance to those of Robert Adam's best period, with ceilings of well-proportioned design. The drawing-room fireplace is especially fine, with coupled Corinthian columns and a sculptured frieze.

The little Rotunda drawing-room is charming, with fluted Corinthian columns forming the walls into panels, which are decorated with restrained and graceful grotesques.

The church of St Chad, Shrewsbury (1790), is an astonishing creation. It has a circular nave and gallery in a rotunda behind a Doric portico and tower, the last feature superimposing the Choragic Monument from Athens upon the Tower of the Winds in a fashion which Regency architects were later to make popular.

The reaction against Adam found another champion in Henry Holland (1746-1806) who, like Wyatt, provided an antidote to the increasing effeminacy of the Adam manner in a restrained firmness and simplicity of design.

The two schools face each other across St James's Street, London: on the one hand is Boodle's Club (1775), by a disciple of Adam, John Crunden. On the other hand is Brooks's Club, remodelled by Henry Holland in 1776 as a severely elegant and somewhat simplified Palladian building.

Before long Holland had evolved the highly personal classical manner with a considerable admixture of Grecian ornament, which he called Graeco-Roman. This he adopted when re-building Carlton House for the Prince of Wales (1783-85). After making a visit here Horace Walpole wrote, 'How sick one shall be, after this chaste palace, of Mr Adam's gingerbread and sippets of

embroidery!' Holland's new style was also apparent in the Marine Pavilion at Brighton which he built for the Prince in 1787, but which was later transformed by Nash. In the same year, Holland made alterations to Melbourne House (later Dover House and now the Scottish Office, Whitehall) where his pleasant little portico may be seen to be based on the drawings in *The Antiquities of Athens* of an Ionic temple on the Illisus at Athens. The simple version of the Ionic order used here shares with its richer and more sophisticated sister of the Erechtheion the honours of a great deal of neo-Grecian architecture during the next fifty years. The same simple form of the Ionic appears in Holland's beautiful library at Althorp, one of the several lovely rooms remodelled by him in 1789, when he also gave the house its distinguished entrance front and casing of his favourite white brick.

At Woburn, Bedfordshire (1787), the most accessible portions of Holland's work are the sculpture gallery and the charming Chinese dairy, one of the few surviving examples in this country of that fashion. The Swan Hotel at Bedford was also designed by him (c. 1790).

Holland's outstanding surviving creation, though not frequently accessible, is Southill, Bedfordshire,¹ which he remodelled in 1795. The garden front, with its loggias of coupled columns, has the simple elegance typical of Holland. The interiors are among Holland's finest, and, as at Althorp, combine the Greek and Roman elements with French influences which derived from his study of French architectural works, and from his employment of French craftsmen.

Holland's interiors are extremely restrained in style. The ceilings sometimes have a shallow vault, but are frequently plain, relieved only by narrow ribs or bands of plaster with key-pattern, *guilloche* or other simple ornament. The foliated capital from Athens, of which Adam was so fond, Holland also used after simplifying it by omitting the row of acanthus leaves. Holland's rooms breathe a spirit of dignified grace that is the expression of his reserved and thoughtful nature.

¹ See *Southill: a Regency House* (various authors), Faber & Faber, London, 1951.



(a) *Roscoe House, Omaha* (1916-18). The original Jacobson house given dignity by a rational entrance court and stately portico. *L. Murphy*



(b) *Katherine Hall, Derbyshire* (1919-20). Robert Adams's South front. The strong relief of the design illustrates his theory of "movement". *A. P. Young*



(a) Screen (1760-65). The Screen Development. One of Adams's finest screens, with characteristic treatment.
C. M. Rogers



(a) Screen, Robert Adams's magnificent entrance hall (1760-65) with marble screen, marble columns, chandeliers, and gilt plaster relief.
by Joseph Bone, A. R. C. Rogers



10. Thomas Lawrence, No. 1 Bullfinch House, London E. 1870-75. An individual interpretation of the neo-classical manner of Augustus.



11. Sir Rowan Trench, No. 21 Devon House, London W. 1870-75. Individual interpretation of the neo-classical manner of Augustus.



(a) The Squire, Brighton (c. 1780). An elegant porch in a simple form of Roman Doric, for a small town house. C. Mayers



(a) Reddish Hall, Hertfordshire (1765-70). A fireplace in the Marble Hall, Adam's delivery and refinement in the manner. The plaster which are by John Ross, the moulds painted by Zucchi. A. P. Rowley



(a) Milton Mount, Berkshire (c. 1764-70). Stephen Wright's delightful Gothic Library, deriving from Kent's simple study Gothic rather than from Strawberry Hill. A. P. Keating.



(a) Bloomsbury Hall, Suffolk (c. 1765). The 'Wagon Room'. A simplified coffered ceiling with gullish borders. James Wyatt's restraint in a small interior. A. P. Keating.



(14) Stratford-upon-Avon (1928-29). George Barker's elegant two-story detached house. *A. P. Keating.*



(15) Pinckney House, Ealing (1928-29). Sir John Soane's elaborate exterior treatment, based on the Roman triumphal arch. *A. P. Keating.*



(a) Oatley House, Middlesbrough (1760-80). The Library. The small-scale ornament of Robert Adam's middle period. *J. P. Keating.*



(b) Middlesbrough, Newcastle (1770-78). One of Adam's most beautiful libraries. The restrained ceiling is of his last middle period (1770) and has painted panels by Zucchi. *J. P. Keating.*

Among the most glorious interiors of the late eighteenth century, rivalling Heveningham and Southill, is Inveraray Castle, Argyllshire, where the little-known architect and engineer Robert Mylne (1734-1811) created the rooms (1772-82) in a castle built by Roger Morris in 1746. The beautiful ceilings, graceful gilded anthemion and foliage friezes, and painted decorations by Biagio Rebecca, are of extraordinary elegance and refined delicacy. The Wick, Richmond, Surrey (1775), is another house of Mylne's.

From 1770 onwards, the smaller houses had reflected increasingly the influence of the Adam brothers, but towards the end of the century the impress of Wyatt was seen in the use of bowed features or wings in country-houses, and very characteristically in the bow-windows of small villas or town-houses. Decoration rarely now extended beyond a classical porch or the ironwork balcony with a canopy which began to appear early in the 1780's. In small houses, the large proportion of window space to blank wall was often so naturally good as to make decoration superfluous. Brown and yellow bricks appeared now instead of red. Stucco was seen increasingly, especially with the rising costs and scarcity of building materials during the Napoleonic wars. In the south, as at Brighton, many houses were fronted with the cream coloured or black glazed 'mathematical' tiles from Hampshire which Holland used at Althorp and at the Prince of Wales's first Marine Pavilion.

In the small interiors of this time, although on a modest scale, architectural features displayed the characteristic Adamite influences in the decoration of a fireplace or the frieze of a room with festoons of husks or a running acanthus scroll, or revealed the inspiration of Holland or Wyatt in the plainer neo-Greek recessed ornament of a key-pattern or incised lines, or in the restrained adornment of semi-circular or elliptical arches to recesses flanking a fireplace, even in the most unpretentious houses.

One of Holland's pupils, Sir John Soane (1753-1837) served him for six years, but it was his 'first revered master' George Dance, junior, who exercised the profoundest influence upon Soane

throughout his career. After studying in Italy, at an early age he was appointed Surveyor to the Bank of England in succession to Sir Robert Taylor, and served in this capacity - 'the pride and boast' of his life - from 1788 to 1833. It was at the Bank that Soane executed the masterpieces of his highly individual style. In abandoning the use of classical orders - columns, pilasters, entablatures and pediments - especially for interiors, Soane continued the attempt of Dance years earlier to free architecture from the rules of Vitruvius and Palladio. By the simplification which Soane and Dance effected they anticipated much that is good in modern architecture, with its insistence that the beauty of the essential masses of a building should depend upon classical proportion and not upon ornament.

In Soane's interiors at the Bank he achieved an almost mystical effect in the abstract handling of space, with a counterpoint play of arches, vaults, and domes, and sparing ornament in the form of incised lines, sunken strips and panels, and areas of grooving.

Soane had been fascinated in Italy by the impedimenta of the Roman Empire, the tripods, urns, vases and sarcophagi with their pedimented lids and acroteria, which are piled up on Piranesi's engraved frontispieces. These elements Soane used with great prodigality on his exteriors, where he permitted himself greater richness and indulged in the use of orders.

The 'Tivoli' corner (1802) at the Lothbury angle of the Bank, with its rich Corinthian columns, heavily swagged frieze, and elaborate attic decorated with amphorae, derives from the beautiful Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli.

At Aynho Park, Northamptonshire, where Soane made alterations (1800-2), he built the entrance in the form of an elaborate Roman triumphal arch, but his interiors in this delightful treasure-house have a contrasting cool simplicity. The rooms are almost devoid of ornament, but are given distinction and beauty by semi-circular and semi-elliptical arched recesses and curved apses, most notably in the drawing-room and the splendid library.

At Pitzhanger Manor (1800-3, now the Ealing

Public Library), which was for a time Soane's own house, the theme of the triumphal arch appears again in the gracious frontage of Ionic columns with projecting entablature carrying statues. The rooms here are in Soane's reticent interior manner, with shallow arches and plain, narrow ribbed mouldings, but there is also some restrained ornament of recessed ceiling panels with rosettes, and a charming sculptured plaque of dancing nymphs. Two of the rooms have Adam-like ceilings and scrolled friezes, and are the earlier work (1770) of George Dance, junior (Pl. 11B).

The mind of Soane is studied best of all in his own house at 12, Lincoln's Inn Fields, now Sir John Soane's Museum (1792-4), where he spent the latter part of his life, and housed his large collection of architectural casts, models and drawings, and paintings, sculpture and antiquities of many kinds, with the object of representing 'the union of architecture, sculpture and painting'. Here are displayed in the fabric itself the motifs of Soane's own designs, and in the collection an

epitome of the themes of classic architecture which were used both by the ancients and by the architects of his own day. In the picture cabinet, with its hanging Gothic arches, and the breakfast room, are found some of the elements of the Picturesque which for Soane went to make up the 'poetry of architecture'.

Soane's later work, at Dulwich Art Gallery and Mausoleum, in his churches, and elsewhere, belongs to a later volume in this series. His influence on contemporaries may be seen in the affinity of his work with that of Holland and Wyatt. Much of his significance rests in the invigorating effect his severe disciplined style had upon architecture when about 1790 it lacked direction for new developments. It is very largely through Soane that Grecian classicism became established as the language of the next cycle of architecture, and that this inspiration was carried forward in the work of his pupil Smirke, and of Wilkins and Nash in the triumphs of the Greek Revival of the Regency, and up to the opening of the Victorian age.

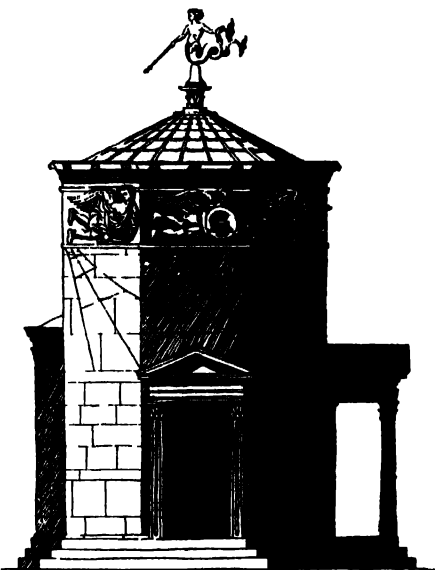


Fig. 5. The Tower of the Winds, Athens. From Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens*, 1762. Source of inspiration for James Wyatt's Radcliffe Observatory at Oxford, and other small buildings of the late eighteenth century.

Furniture

Furniture

R. T. JOY

Few students of furniture history would quarrel with the statement that the half century or so after 1760 marked the zenith of English cabinet-making. During this period the closest harmony existed between the work of the architect and that of the furniture-maker, and the skill of the craftsman was at its highest. English furniture in the neo-classical style set a European fashion, and equalled in technique the best work of the great French cabinet-makers, two facts which give point to Hepplewhite's statement in 1788 that 'English taste and workmanship have, of late years, been much sought for by surrounding nations'.

For the whole of this period furniture-making was carried on by the traditional methods of the craftsman, although wood-working machinery had been patented by Sir Samuel Bentham in the 1790's. There was, however, no simple pattern in the organization of the industry; on the contrary, since early Georgian times almost every type of industrial organization had been developing, especially in the towns, and above all, in London. This diversity is explained by the growth of specialization and the extent of the market. The village craftsman represented the unspecialized workman because his market was so limited. 'A country carpenter', wrote Adam Smith in 1776, 'deals in every kind of work that is made of wood . . . (he) is not only a carpenter, but a joiner, a cabinet-maker and even a carver in wood.' This was in marked contrast with the specialization of the town craftsmen, among whom could be found minute sub-divisions of trades. In London a

cabinet-maker – to take only one class of craftsman as an example – might mean one of several things: a craftsman-shopkeeper who was responsible for the making on his own premises of the furniture which he sold to the public; or a capitalist-shopkeeper who was a dealer only, retailing furniture which he bought from outside craftsmen, and sometimes supplying it to other dealers for sale in different parts of the country and overseas; or a working master who was not a shopkeeper, but had his own workshop where he made furniture, or parts of it, for the shops and other craftsmen; or, finally, one of the numerous journeymen who either worked at home as out-workers by the piece for the shops and masters, or were wage-earners in other craftsmen's workshops. These divisions were subject to endless variations as one merged into the other.

The pre-eminence of London

It is well to emphasize the predominant position of London, not only in the size of the market and the physical output of furniture – the capital's population was a million at the census of 1811, when Manchester's, then the next largest city, was some 130,000 – but also in its leadership in styles and techniques. There were, of course, plenty of excellent craftsmen in the main provincial towns, but they looked to the capital for the latest furniture fashions, and one of the chief functions of the many design books which emanated from London in this period was to spread these new ideas (to quote Hepplewhite again) 'to many of our own Countrymen and Artizans

whose distance from the Metropolis makes even an imperfect knowledge of its improvements acquired with much trouble and expense'. Ever since Defoe's day there had been a noticeable tendency for some London furniture shops to grow in size. In the second half of the eighteenth century St Paul's Churchyard began to lose some, but by no means all, of its reputation as the main centre for high-quality furniture, for many of the fashionable shops were now to be found in the Covent Garden, St Martin's Lane and Long Acre district, and in Soho, Old and New Bond Street, Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road, where they were close to the newer residential areas. Some shops where the furniture was made on the premises under the control of a craftsman were of a large size and resembled in a way a departmental store. Such, for example, was the well-known shop of George Seddon in Aldersgate Street (not, it will be noted, in one of the fashionable areas just mentioned) which was described by a German visitor, Sophie von la Roche, in 1786 as a large building with six wings employing 'four hundred apprentices (i.e. journeymen) on any work connected with the making of furniture'.¹ The stock of the firm, including carpets, wood and mirrors (which were cast and cut in the basement) was valued at nearly £119,000 in 1789, shortly after the above description was written.

Even in the case of the smaller shops the nature of the work must have made the craftsmen in charge more business men than craftsmen. Chipendale, for instance, travelled so much about the country to attend to customer's requirements, which often included the fitting up of a whole house, that he could not possibly have had time to see personally to the work being carried out in his workshop. This means that much of the fine furniture which came from the better-known shops was made, not by the craftsman whose name appeared on the bill, but by the foreman and band of highly-skilled, unknown workmen – carvers, inlayers, chair-makers, upholsterers, etc. – to whom the real credit should go.

Little is known in detail of the other kinds of shops which were run by dealers, but it is clear that there were very many of them in London doing a considerable business. Mortimer's *Universal Director* of 1763, which was the first London directory to classify trades, stated that its list of cabinet-makers 'contains only such as either work themselves, or employ workmen under their direction; and that not one of those numerous Cabinet Warehouses which sell ready-made Furniture bought of the real artist, is to be met with in this work'. The general scope of the work of these dealers is illustrated by the handbill of Wilkinson & Sons who kept a 'Cabinet, Upholstery, Carpet and Looking-Glass Warehouse' in Cheapside. This bill (in the Guildhall Collection, dated 1779) advertises that the shop 'keeps ready made in the most genteel taste' a very wide range of goods which are given in detail, including such items as 'library, writing, ladies' dressing, Pembroke, dining, card and tea tables' and 'cabriole, japand, dyed and Windsor chairs'. The statement concludes: 'N.B. Merchants, Captains and others may be supplied with the above Goods at the most Reasonable Rates,' indicating that these shops were one of the channels through which furniture and upholstery were sent from London to distant parts of the country and overseas.

London cabinet-ware exports reached all parts of the world with which we had trading relations, foreign countries as well as British colonies. In 1800 the total value of British furniture exports (mainly from London) was well over £38,000 in the official Customs returns, even though we were then at war with France; and this figure was certainly an understatement, for the real value was probably well above that given, and did not include all the furniture taken out of the country by emigrants, or the goods traded privately to India by the officials of the East India Company. It was not, of course, only dealers who sent goods abroad, for furniture from good craftsmen's shops is known to have gone to the rich planter classes in the West Indies and to North America where it was imported by rich Americans or by the cabinet-makers to copy and re-sell. This trade continued to flourish well into the nineteenth cen-

¹ *Sophie in London, 1786* (trans. by C. Williams, 1933).

tury until it was curtailed by the increasingly heavy duties on imported timber. The English furniture industry in the Georgian period can never be divorced from its world-wide setting.

The Adam style

For a quarter of a century after 1760 the great name in furniture design was Robert Adam (1728-92). In place of the medley of styles of the early Chippendale period - the rococo, Gothic and Chinese, which were in reality variations on the same theme - he designed in the neo-classical style, and his furniture was an essential part of his scheme of treating the decoration of a house, inside and out, as a harmonious whole. In his own words in the preface to *The Works in Architecture* in 1773 he was greatly inspired by 'the grotesque . . . that beautiful light style of ornament used by the ancient Romans in the decoration of their palaces, baths and villas. . . . This classical style of ornament, by far the most perfect that has ever appeared for inside decorations . . . requires not only fancy and imagination in the composition, but taste and judgement in the application; and when these are happily combined, this gay and elegant mode is capable of inimitable beauties.' Adam's furniture in this style employed a variety of classical motifs carried out with great delicacy; among them were festoons of husks, paterae, the honeysuckle, ram's heads, vases, urns, the acanthus leaf, and medallions (Pls. 16D, 17A, 19A). These could be found carved in low relief in the solid, or, perhaps at their best, in the fine inlaid work, for which many choice coloured woods were used, particularly satinwood. Adam designed for rich patrons and the furniture was made by leading craftsmen, including Chippendale at Kenwood, Harewood House, Nostell Priory, Meresham Hatch and elsewhere, France and Beckwith at Kenwood, Linnell at Osterley, and Norman at Moor Park. Among the earliest furniture Adam is known to have designed was some for Queen Charlotte, and her beautiful bed, which originally stood in the Queen's House, now Buckingham Palace, can be seen today in the Public Dining Room at Hampton Court.

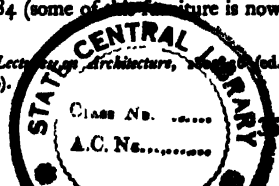
The new style did not completely sweep away

the Chinese and Gothic modes, which still found a certain amount of favour; and French-style furniture continued to enjoy a vogue among the upper classes. Many cabinet-makers imported French pieces to sell to their clients or to copy - Chippendale was fined by the Customs in 1769 for alleged under-valuation of chairs which he had imported from France - and Adam complied with the demand by designing pieces, particularly upholstered chairs, with a distinctly French flavour. But his new classical style was catching on in the 1760's. 'The light and elegant ornaments,' wrote Sir John Soane in the early nineteenth century, ' . . . were soon applied in designs for Chairs, Tables, Carpets, and in every other species of Furniture. To Mr Adam's taste in the Ornaments of his Buildings and Furniture we stand indebted, in-as-much as Manufacturers of every kind felt, as it were, the electric power of this Revolution in Art.'¹

Holland and the Regency style

The inevitable reaction against the Adam style set in before the end of the century, and the changes were heralded by the work of the gifted architect and designer, Henry Holland (1745-1806). Unlike other architects, he did not make a tour of classical sites abroad, and this probably made him more receptive to new trends, especially from France, for he was also closely connected with the Whig coterie which surrounded the Prince of Wales (the future Regent and George IV), and he shared their enthusiasm for French ideas. At first he followed a modified Adam style, but later branched out into the English version of what came to be known as the French 'Directoire' style. He stressed the close adaptation of Graeco-Roman forms of decoration, and to obtain accuracy of detail he sent his draughtsman, C. H. Tatham, to Rome in 1794 to study antique classical ornament at first hand. Holland's best-known furniture designs were carried out for the Prince of Wales at Carlton House from 1784 (some of the furniture is now

¹ Sir J. Soane, *Lectures on Architecture*, 2nd ed. (ed. A. T. Bolton, 1929).



at Buckingham Palace), and for Samuel Whitbread at Southill from 1795. The strength of French influence is shown by the fact that Holland employed French craftsmen at both places.³

This new classic style has been given the general name of 'Regency'. So far as furniture is concerned, this must remain a somewhat vague and elastic term, by no means coinciding with the actual political limits of the Regency, for while the latter lasted from 1811 to 1820, the changes in design, as has been shown, were clearly evident before the close of the preceding century. In fact, it was in 1785 that Horace Walpole saw Holland's work at Carlton House and wrote his well-known comment: 'How sick one shall be after this chaste place, of Mr Adam's gingerbread and sippets of embroidery!' We must allow that Walpole was not a friendly critic of Adam's work, but his sentiments were shared by others after the turn of the century. In 1808, for instance, C. A. Busby described Adam as 'a mannerist' and wrote: 'This ebullition of a false taste having now subsided, the latter (i.e. Adam) is considered only as an Artist of enterprize and ability.'⁴ Soane's appreciation of Adam, already quoted, was noteworthy at a time when the latter's style was considered outmoded.

Holland had a sure grasp of style, and however much he was influenced by French designs, he never fell into the habit of merely copying them, but gave them an unmistakable English twist. He favoured the use of rosewood with resplendent ormolu mounts, marble tops to chiffoniers, tapered, gilded and fluted pillars, lion's legs on smaller tables, and round tops for larger tables mounted on a massive pedestal or monopodium. He also designed chairs and settees at Southill in imitation bamboo, in the Chinese fashion, and at times used Egyptian motifs, such as the lotus leaf, another characteristic of the Regency style.

³ For Holland's furniture see D. Stroud, *Henry Holland* (1950), and F. Watson's chapter in *Southill: a Regency House* (1951).

⁴ C. A. Busby, *A Series of Designs for Villas & Country Houses* (1808).

After Holland

While Holland was alive this new treatment was kept under control, but after his death in 1806 it began to degenerate into a somewhat narrow archæological approach which resulted in very close copies of classical furniture, Egyptian, Greek and Roman. The pioneer of this new interpretation, which was at first founded on sound scholarship, was Thomas Hope (1769-1831), a rich banker and collector of antiques, who had had some training as an architect. In 1807 he published his *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* in which he aimed, as he wrote in the introduction, at 'that breadth and repose of surface, that distinctness and contrast of outline, that opposition of plain and enriched parts, that harmony and significance of accessories . . . which are calculated to afford to the eye and mind the most lively, most permanent and most unfading enjoyment'. He spoke of the 'association of all the elegancies of antique forms and ornaments with all the requisites of modern customs and habits'. It is not difficult to understand how designers of the time who lacked Hope's scholarly knowledge merely imitated ancient furniture, often in a lifeless way, and these results could be seen at the very end of the period under review.

The ideas behind all these changes in design after about 1785 were well expressed by Archibald Alison in his *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*, which were first published in 1790 and reached their sixth edition in 1825. He stressed the importance of delicacy and straight lines: 'All Furniture . . . is Beautiful in proportion to its quantity of Matter, or the Fineness or Delicacy of it. Strong and Massy Furniture is everywhere vulgar and displeasing . . . progress terminates in that last degree of Delicacy and even of Fragility, which is consistent either with the nature of the Workmanship or the preservation of the Subject.' The models should be 'the Forms of Grecian or Roman Furniture . . . in scarcely any of them is the winding or serpentine Form observed; . . . on the contrary, the lightest and most beautiful of them are almost universally distinguished by straight or angular Lines'. All this

is typical of what we call Sheraton style furniture. Alison justified the Chinese and Gothic styles by the ideas with which they were associated. For example, Chinese furniture, 'however fantastic and uncouth the Forms in reality were . . . brought to mind those images of Eastern magnificence and splendour of which we have heard so much'. Similarly, with regard to the Gothic taste, 'this slight association was sufficient to give Beauty to such Forms, because it led to ideas of Gothic manners and adventure'.

The design books

The architect-designers worked for a relatively small clientele and designed furniture of high quality. The translation of their styles into general furniture, including quite humble pieces, was accomplished by the authors of design books which were intended, as Hepplewhite wrote, to be 'useful to the mechanic and serviceable to the gentleman'. Chippendale's *Director* of 1754 had been the first of such furniture catalogues to be published by a cabinet-maker and not by a builder, artist or architect, and it was followed by many others. At the end of the decade 1760-70 the neo-classical style began to appear in such publications. At first the mid-century fashions set by Chippendale, the third edition of whose *Director* appeared in 1762, were continued in Ince and Mayhew's *Universal System of Household Furniture* (1759-63) and in various works by Matthias Lock, Robert Manwaring (who specialized in chair designs) and others. But in 1769 Lock, who was a carver as well as designer, and had been the pioneer of the rococo in England, showed his versatility by publishing two works, the *New Book of Pier Frames* and the *New Book of Foliage* which contained the first engraved designs of furniture in the Adam style. What really popularized the new mode, however, was Hepplewhite's *Guide* of 1788, published two years after the author's death. With nearly 300 designs, covering all kinds of furniture, it illustrated admirably how the application of Adam's principles, 'the latest or most prevailing fashion', could 'unite elegance and utility, and blend the useful with the agreeable'. Designs similar to Hepplewhite's appeared

in the *Cabinet-Makers' London Book of Prices*, also published in 1788; many of the plates for this had been designed by Thomas Shearer, who re-issued them under his own name as *Designs for Household Furniture* in the same year.

The changes at the end of the century were interpreted in Thomas Sheraton's famous *Drawing Book*, published in parts between 1791-4. It reflected the emphasis on light and delicate furniture, the making of which required a very high standard of skill from the craftsmen; in fact, the furniture of this particular period can properly be considered among the most technically perfect ever made in this country. Sheraton also published a *Cabinet Dictionary* in 1803, and the first volume of an unfinished *Encyclopaedia* in 1805. The latter, however, showed signs of the deterioration which was then beginning to mark furniture design. Hope's publication of 1807, already referred to, differed from the others in that it was not the work of a craftsman. His principles were generally applied to furniture in 1808 by George Smith, a cabinet-maker, in his *Household Furniture*. Smith did not possess Hope's scholarship, and he lost some of the spirit in which Hope's interpretations were made.

Leading cabinet-makers

Some of these designers were also craftsmen of great repute in their own day, but this by no means applied to all of them. Among the names in the above list, those of Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton are household words, and will remain so. Their fame, however, is due to their well-advertised skill as designers and to the very convenient way in which their names can label the furniture of their period, rather than to their supremacy as craftsmen. Chippendale was certainly responsible for fine pieces, but he had no royal appointment and it is a curious fact that his best work was done, not in the styles of his own *Director*, but in the quite different Adam style. Hepplewhite does not seem to have enjoyed any great reputation as a furniture-maker. As for Sheraton, who died in poverty, there is no evidence that he ever had a workshop of his own.

Many contemporary craftsmen of outstanding

worth have been unfairly overshadowed by these designers. In the 'sixties flourished the great partnership of William Vile and John Cobb; Vile, indeed, did work in the rococo style in its later phase here which surpassed that of Chippendale. When the neo-classical style took root, outstanding pieces, in addition to Chippendale's (already noted), were produced by William Gates and John Linnell. At the end of the century and just after, prominent names were those of William Marsh, Thomas Tatham (these last two were partners for a time), Thomas Chippendale the younger, and George Oakley. On the other hand, among those who published design books we find that the partners Ince and Mayhew ranked highly as craftsmen, and so did George Smith, who had royal appointments in the early nineteenth century. Two long-lived firms, those of Gillow and Seddon, were also widely known throughout this period.

Decoration

Several new forms of decoration, and revivals of older ones, appeared on furniture during this period. And one traditional decorative craft, that of the carver, though strongly evident for most of the period, was decaying in the early nineteenth century. In 1761 J. Collyer described carvers as 'ingenious men . . . never out of business', but in 1813, T. Martin, author of *The Circle of the Mechanical Arts*, wrote thus: 'Carving in wood has long been in the background, as a branch of the arts. . . . There are now only eleven master carvers in London, and about sixty journeymen (though at one time there were six hundred); many of the latter are now very old. They make no shew of their work, and live in private houses.'

One feature of the Adam style was the revival of marquetry in the form of fine inlaid work (Pl. 16b, 18c). This was similar in technique to the marquetry of the walnut period, but differed from it in emphasizing classical decoration. Towards 1800 this kind of decoration gradually gave way to the simpler form of 'stringing', by which a thin line of wood or, more particularly at the end of this period, brass, was inlaid on the furniture (Pl. 15b, 18a). This change, and the reasons for

it, was thus described by Sheraton in 1803: - 'Inlaying, in cabinet-making, was much in use between twenty and thirty years back; but was soon laid aside, as a very expensive mode of ornamenting furniture, as well as being subject to speedy decay. The present mode of inlaying with brass, is most durable and looks well let into black woods of any kind.' This brass work is a characteristic feature of furniture at the turn of the century, and set off the dark glossy and striped woods which became popular after the decay of carving and inlay.

There were new developments in metal mounts. When Matthew Boulton, the industrial pioneer and partner of James Watt, opened his famous factory at Soho, near Birmingham, in 1762, he began to manufacture ormolu mounts, finely chased, and of a rich, golden colour. Boulton always aimed at a high artistic standard in his products, and was influenced by Adam's work. Samuel Smiles, in his life of Boulton and Watt, quotes Lord Shelburne as writing to Adam that 'he (i.e. Boulton) is very desirous of cultivating Mr Adam's taste in his productions'. In the last quarter of the century a new method of manufacturing back-plates for drawer handles came into use. In 1777 two Birmingham brass-founders, John Marston and Samuel Bellamy, improved upon John Pickering's invention of 1769 by patenting a method of stamping ornaments on plated metal for cabinet furniture.⁸ The plates of brass were moulded by dies, and were usually circular, oval or octagonal in shape (Pl. 16a). About 1800 another form of handle appeared: small brass knobs, many in the shape of a lion's head with a ring through the mouth. Turned mahogany knobs were also used (Pl. 17a).

The vogue for lighter and more delicate furniture led to a revival of three fashionable late seventeenth-century features which had undergone a more or less total eclipse: turning, cane work, and japanning. Turned legs on chairs and tables, of slender proportions and often fluted, were in great favour (Pl. 14c and d, 16a).

⁸ Patent Office Library, Old Series of Abridgements of Specifications, Class 39, Furniture & Upholstery, 1620-1866 (1869).



Fig. 1. Turned and reeded chair-leg.



Fig. 2. Spiral twist chair-leg.

Sheraton also shows turned and reeded legs (Fig. 1) on some of his pieces, and about 1800 spiral-twisted turning could be found on chair legs and backs (Fig. 2), and as columns at the corners of chests of drawers. As for cane work and japanning, these went together, as Sheraton himself pointed out: 'Caning cabinet work is now more in use than it was ever known to be at any former period. About thirty years since, it was quite gone out of fashion . . . But on the revival of japanning furniture it began to be gradually brought into use, and to a state of improvement.' This later method of japanning, however, was much inferior to the original process; it was merely paint and varnish, even in the case of the well-known bedroom suite for Garrick at Hampton. At the end of the century it was often used for brightly coloured patterns (Pl. 14D).

Woods: mahogany

The extensive character of British trade enabled the cabinet-makers of the later Georgian period to take their pick of the world's choicest furniture woods. The outstanding wood was mahogany from the West Indies and Central America, and the most important event in the history of the mahogany trade was the Act of 1721 (8 Geo. 1, c. 12) which freed timbers grown in the British plantations in America (including the West Indies) from their former heavy import duties. In 1750 the value of imported mahogany, which included wood smuggled from Spanish

colonies via Jamaica to avoid the duties on foreign timbers, was nearly £30,000, compared with £221 in 1721. So important had the trade become that in 1770 the Government, at the instigation of Customs officials, passed another Act (11 Geo. III, c. 41) extending this freedom from duty to all American timbers, foreign and British alike, as mahogany – so ran the preamble of the Act – had 'become very useful and necessary to cabinet-makers' and further supplies would encourage increased exports of furniture from Britain. In 1792 the import value was £79,554, and in 1800, despite the war with France and the re-imposition of duties, £77,744. The quantity represented by these last two sums was in each case well over 7,000 tons. After about 1750 the Cuban variety of mahogany, easier to work, richly coloured, and often with a range of beautiful figures (among them 'fiddle-backs', 'roes', and 'curls') began to replace the earlier San Domingo variety, which was harder and denser, and had little figure. In the later part of the century mahogany from Honduras (often called 'baywood') was popular; it was lighter in both colour and weight, and was sometimes used as a carcass for Cuban veneers, though for this purpose red deal, imported from North America, was commonly employed. In the figures quoted for import values in 1792 Honduras mahogany accounted for nearly £46,000 of the total, and in Sheraton's day it was 'the principal kind of mahogany in use among cabinet-makers'.

Satinwood and rosewood

Towards the end of the century two other woods were in demand for the best quality furniture: satinwood and rosewood. Satinwood was imported from both the West and East Indies, and its light yellow colour and fine figure, which showed up beautifully under polish, made it ideal for the delicate pieces of the period. It was used mainly as a veneer on case furniture (Pl. 18c), though some work in the solid (chairs and tables) was evident about 1800. Rosewood was particularly important after 1800; heavy, dense, and marked with dark streaks, it set the current fashion for dark, glossy woods, and its use was

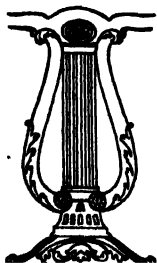


Fig. 3. Lyre back of chair.



Fig. 4. Prince of Wales' feather back of chair.

encouraged by the opening of direct trade with South America, where the chief source of supply was Brazil, during the Napoleonic Wars. It would be incorrect to assume that these woods supplanted each other in turn, as mahogany had supplanted walnut; it would be more accurate to say that one was more fashionable than the others at particular times, for fine furniture. In general terms it may be said that towards the end of this period mahogany was used for the best furniture in dining-rooms, bedrooms and libraries, and satinwood and rosewood in drawing-rooms and boudoirs. But it can be noted that in 1810 cabinet-makers were still defined in *Crosby's Pocket Dictionary* as 'workers in mahogany and other fine woods'.

Other woods

Many timbers besides those mentioned were in demand for their colour or figure. Fustic, long imported from the West Indies for dyeing, enjoyed a temporary popularity in cabinet work after about 1770 because of its yellow colour, but it fell into disuse when it was found to fade to a dead brownish hue. Various beautiful shades of brown and red, light and dark, were provided by exotic woods like calamander from Ceylon, coromandel from India, thuya from Africa, kingwood, partridge wood, purple wood, zebra wood and tulip wood all from Brazil, and amboyna from the West Indies. All these could be found as veneers or decorative bandings. It was the great demand for veneers with striped figure which explains the particular use of many of these woods after 1800.

Cheaper foreign woods which were imported included red cedar from North and Central America for boxes and drawer linings, and red deal from North America which, after 1750, began to replace yellow deal from the Baltic for carcass work.

English timbers were used considerably by leading cabinet-makers, and were by no means confined, as is sometimes supposed, to country craftsmen. Some native woods resembled the more expensive foreign varieties. Suitably figured pieces of birch and chestnut, for instance, could be used as substitutes for satinwood; acacia was used instead of tulip wood; and ebony, which had been imported since the sixteenth century for its black colour, was not now in such demand, since it could be imitated by staining close-grained woods like pear and willow for the 'ebonized' stringing on Regency pieces. Sycamore, stained to give a greenish-grey colour, and known as silver-wood or harewood, was often used as a veneer on late eighteenth-century work. Without such refinements, these and other native woods were found on the simple but attractive furniture made by country craftsmen or by cabinet-makers in the smaller towns, in imitation of better quality work. For painted furniture beech was usually employed, but plane was often substituted for this in country areas. And in the traditional craft of Windsor chair-making elm for the seat, beech or ash for the spindles, and yew for the frame continued to be frequently used.

Fashionable furniture: chairs

Under Adam's influence chairs were lighter and more graceful than those of the rococo period. Characteristic features were straight legs which tapered from knee blocks at the level of the seat rail to feet ending on small plinths, delicate classical motifs carved, inlaid, or painted, and a graceful outline for the backs. The latter had many variations; oval, shield and heart shapes became fashionable, but the rectilinear form was also in use, as, for example, on some early specimens of about 1775 which had lyre-shaped splats (Fig. 3). Where carving was employed it usually took the form of delicate channelling or fluting on the back frame, carved oval paterae on the knee blocks,

fluting on the tapered legs, and continuous moulding along the seat edge. Adam's upholstered chairs closely followed French models, and he used beautiful materials like brocades and tapestries for upholstering both backs (which were oval in shape) and seats. The latter were overstuffed, but showed the lower part of the seat frames clear, and these were often decorated with gadrooning. Sometimes chairs of this kind had serpentine-curved front legs ending on scroll feet, the last version of the cabriole leg, and had arms with padded tops, covered with the same material as backs and seats (Pl. 13).

As can be expected, oval, shield and heart shapes figured prominently on the chair designs in Hepplewhite's *Guide*, and in many cases the splats were not connected with the back of the seats. Hepplewhite's name is particularly associated with the shield back and the familiar Prince of Wales' feathers (Fig. 4), but he designed many other fillings for his back, including leaves, drapery, wheat-ears, vases and honeysuckle, and he by no means neglected rectilinear backs. The legs were generally of square section and tapered slightly to plinth feet. Many of the supports of the arms of both Adam and Hepplewhite chairs had a common feature in that they did not rise from the side rails of the seat, but continued from the front legs to just above the seat, and then swept backwards in a pronounced curve to straighten out at the arm-rests, which joined the back of the chair about half-way up. (For these details see Pl. 14A and B.)

A great variety of designs was found on chairs of the Sheraton style, but the emphasis was decidedly on backs of rectangular shape. Some cresting rails were turned; others were wide and flat and overran the uprights, and were curved for the sitter's back – this was a novel design very characteristic of chairs of about 1800. The backs were left as open as possible; the fillings took many forms – sometimes a single cross rail, or, when splats were used, trellis bars, pierced circles between pairs of bars, or a panel of cane set in a small frame. Painted chairs usually had bright designs on a black background, turned legs, and seats of cane. A feature of front legs was that they were often shaped in concave curves and tapered gradually to the floor without any special foot design. It was another characteristic of chairs of this time that their arms swept up in a pronounced S-curve to join the back uprights close to the cresting rail. Stringing, the delicate, thin lines of wood or brass, could be found on the broad types of cresting rails. In general, this period was distinguished for the delicacy of its chair design, but the lightness was soon to be lost in the heavier decoration of the Regency style. (Sheraton chairs, Pl. 14C and D.)

Settees followed the same main trends as chairs; they must, however, be carefully distinguished from sofas or couches which were popular at the time. Settees were extensions of armchairs, while couches were descendants of day-beds, and were used for reclining. The couch of classical design figured very prominently in the Regency period (Fig. 5).

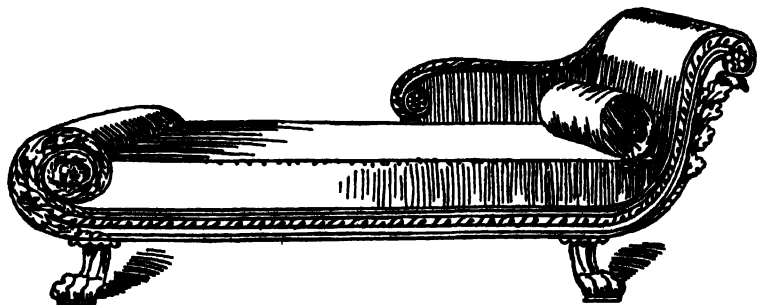


Fig. 5. Late eighteenth-century couch.

Chests of drawers, commodes, tallboys

Chests of drawers of the old plain rectangular form continued to be made after 1760, but often with five or six drawers, and thus somewhat taller than the earlier ones. Many were made of mahogany, either solid or veneered; in the latter case, it was usual to have a carcase of red deal and drawer linings of oak. A general feature of this type was the cock bead round the drawer edge; in fact, this form of moulding, which was introduced during the walnut period, was almost exclusively used throughout the century after about 1745. Some low chests of drawers had the top drawer hinged at the bottom so that it could be opened as a writing flap, and the drawer itself could be pulled forwards. This construction succeeded the writing slide which had been fitted above the top drawer of many chests in the earlier part of the century, and which was pulled out with small loop handles. After 1770 French influence could be seen on these plainer pieces in the form of a delicate outward curving of the feet, instead of the square bracket feet.

But it was in the development of commodes that the French taste was most marked. These pieces stood in reception rooms or the best bedrooms and were often elaborately decorated. Pl. 15A shows a remarkably fine specimen of this kind of about 1765. In the Adam period outstanding examples were made of satinwood inlaid with various woods and decorated with a variety of classical motifs, or with figures and scenes from classical mythology, all worked with the greatest skill. Among them is the famous 'Diana and Minerva' commode supplied by Chippendale, almost certainly to Adam's design, for Harewood House in November, 1773. The inlay work on

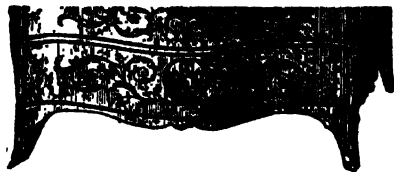


Fig. 6. Apron piece of bow-fronted chest of drawers.

this piece is superb, particularly on the concave surface of the knee-hole, and the veneers, which are still in excellent condition, illustrate the extraordinary care with which cabinet-makers chose their woods for work of this kind.

After 1775 many chests of drawers were bow- or serpentine-fronted (Fig. 6). Reeded quarter columns were sometimes found on the front corners, and spirally turned feet were fashionable. Stringing in wood or brass was used as a decoration for drawer fronts in the Sheraton period, another distinctive feature of which was the exceptionally wide frieze above the top drawer.

Tallboys or chests-on-chests continued to follow the main developments of the plainer chests of drawers, but they were gradually going out of fashion in the later part of the eighteenth century owing to the inconvenient height of the upper drawers. In the final phase, some bow-fronted ones were made.

Sideboards

One interesting development in this period was the emergence of the sideboard, and credit for this new piece is now generally given to Robert Adam. 'A side Board table in the dining-room' appears among Adam's designs for Kenwood in the *Works in Architecture* of 1773. This shows the first stage in the arrangement of the sideboard – a side table flanked by two detached pedestal cupboards supporting urns (Pl. 16n). Later the two pedestals were joined directly to the table to form one complete unit. The urns were retained and were used as knife boxes, and drawers were fitted to the table and in some cases to the pedestals (Fig. 7). Finally, the sideboard in its more modern shape appeared; the pedestals were replaced by smaller cupboard or drawers, supported on turned or tapered legs (these were six or eight in number), the table continued to hold drawers, and the whole piece was bow- or serpentine-fronted (Pl. 16c). The urns were now discarded, and the central bay below the table top was often designed to allow space for a wine cooler, which was made in the same style as the rest of the sideboard. In the Sheraton period some beautiful smaller sideboards were made, often serpentine-fronted, and with characteristic

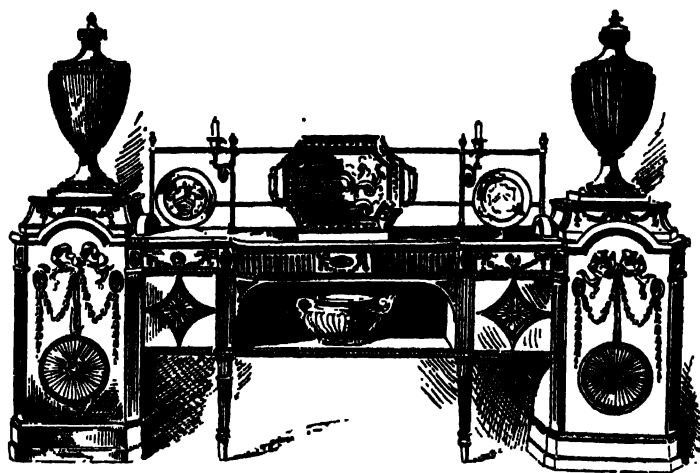


Fig. 7. Adam sideboard, second half of eighteenth century.

turned and reeded legs. As a piece of furniture the sideboard quickly achieved popularity; 'the great utility of this piece,' wrote Hepplewhite, 'has procured it a very general reception.' Many were fitted at the back with a brass rail for displaying the family plate.

Early in the nineteenth century the sideboard lost its general lightness and there was a revival of the earlier type of pedestals and table. Urns were not used, but the pedestals were heavier in design than the earlier variety. The cupboards in all types were used for storing the various appurtenances of the dining-room, and sometimes they were lined with metal to keep plates hot, to hold wine bottles, or even to contain water for rinsing. A vivid light on the social habits of the time is thrown by the revelation that they also contained what a foreign visitor, Louis Simond, a Frenchman long domiciled in the United States, delicately described during his visit to England in 1810-11 as 'a certain convenient-piece of furniture, to be used by anybody who wants it'. The reasons for its presence can best be left to Simond's own words: 'I once took the liberty to ask why this convenient

article was not placed out of the room, in some adjoining closet; and was answered, that, in former times, when good fellowship was more strictly enforced than in these degenerate days, it had been found that men of weak heads or stomachs took advantage of the opportunity to make their escape shamefully, before they were quite drunk; and that it was to guard against such an enormity that this nice expedient had been invented. I have seen the article in question regularly provided in houses where there were no men, that is, no master of the house; the mistress, therefore, must have given the necessary orders to her servants.'*

Tables

Tables varied so much in size that they are best considered in three categories - small tables, dining tables and tripod tables. In addition to the side tables which were components of the early sideboards, the Adam period saw the development of variously shaped small tables - tops, semi-circular

* L. Simond, *Journal of a Tour & Residence in G. Britain, 1810-11* (1817).

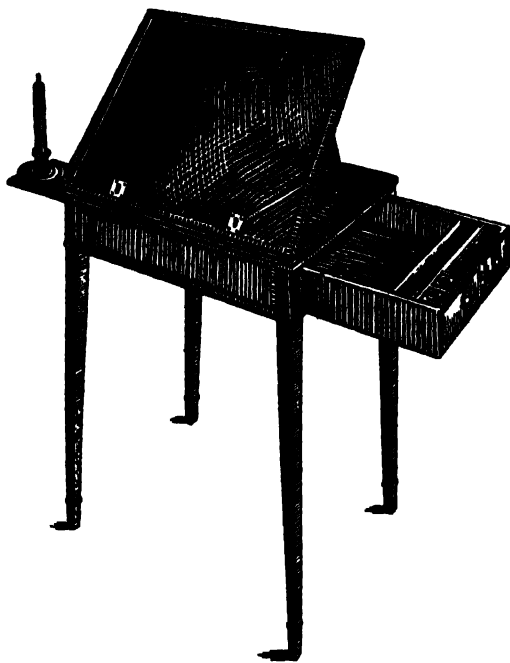


Fig. 8. Sheraton writing table.

when closed, were popular—for tea-drinking, card-playing, writing, dressing, or as pier and console (Pl. 16A) tables. On all the classical ornaments might be carved, inlaid, or painted. These tables usually had either square or turned tapering legs, often fluted, or slender French cabriole legs with knurl or scroll feet. Early in the Adam period the Pembroke table began its long vogue. This type had two flaps (usually semi-circular) and often a drawer (which might be at one end only, with a dummy drawer at the other) (Pl. 16B). The Sheraton period is distinguished for the number of very delicate tables which were made. The high standard of workmanship of the time meant that such tables could be very strong despite their fragile appearance. It was the custom to stand many of these tables about the living rooms of

large houses, and as some were expressly designed for ladies' use portability was an important consideration. Among them were little writing tables (Fig. 8) 'finished neat, in mahogany or satinwood', work tables with ingenious arrangements of drawers and sliding tops, and nests of tables. From the Pembroke table developed the sofa table, a longer version with small end flaps, standing (unlike the Pembroke, which almost always had four tapering legs) on a pedestal foot, or on two end supports linked by a stretcher (Pl. 17A). A very typical piece of the Regency period was the round topped table for writing or for use in libraries. This was mounted either on a turned column resting on curved (and often reeded) legs, or on a solid pedestal base with claw feet. The top had a frieze with drawers, or it might be left open for books.



The Dining Room, West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire, showing splendorous chairs in the French style, popular in the Adams period. West Wycombe Park, Bucks. Eng.



(14) Mahogany shield-back armchair, decorated with girders and foliage in holly wood, c. 1780.
Gift of Kensington Collection.



(15) Mahogany armchair, with split work of carved diaper, c. 1780.



(16) Rosewood armchair, with turned front legs, stretchers, arm supports and crossing rail. Note the panel of cane in the back, c. 1800.



(17) Armchair with painted floral designs, turned legs and arm supports, and cane seat, c. 1790.
Gift of J. M. Western Collection.



(4) *Commode, veneered and inlaid with various woods, c. 1765. Formerly part of the Duke of Devonshire's collection.*



(5) *Regency bookcase inlaid with ivory. Its low height is due to the fashion of leaving the walls free for pictures. Metropolitan Museum, New York.*



(a) Console table with marble top. The decoration is in carved wood, except for the tops which are cast in lead, a feature in vogue in the late eighteenth century. c. 1780.



(b) Pembroke table with semi-circular top and reeded legs.



(c) Bow-fronted mahogany sideboard, with native wood inlay, late eighteenth century.



(d) Pedestal and urn, with carved and inlaid neo-classic decoration. Part of a dining-room suite, c. 1770.



(4) Regency mahogany side table with curved and corded legs, brass feet and curved stretchers.



(5) Curved and inlaid mahogany side table, part of a dining-room suite, c. 1835.



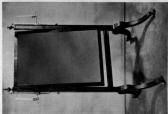
(a) Regency: circular table-inlaid with brass, showing the prevailing collar-and-claw support.



(a) Painted wooden table with hinged top and curved feet, c. 1795, Col. J. M. Rymer-Collection.



(b) Cabinet, c. 1790, recovered on mahogany with West Indian native wood inlaid with conventional designs. Attributed to Chippendale and Wedg. (Forest and Plummer-Copy Collection at Yale Univ.)



101. Choral glass with mirrored and etched top, from the 1920s
from London, c. 1920s



102. The glass mirrored by a choral top and top
small, below, a mirror, set in a choral top
from London, c. 1920s



(x) An example of portable furniture: a travelling chair-bed made by Thomas Butler, c. 1790, and carrying his later.



(x) A sculptor's malagasy adjustable modelling table, c. 1775.



(x) Malagasy library wheelfurniture with shaped sides and curved arms, early nineteenth-century.
Don Furness Collection

For dining tables mahogany remained the favourite wood; its long planks gave both spaciousness and strength. Various forms of the gate leg were still made. One type consisted of a pair of tables each of which had a fifth leg which could be swung out to support a flap, the whole piece, when fitted up, forming a rectangle. In other examples three units were employed, two semi-circular side tables and a gate-leg table with rectangular flaps; and when a long table was needed for dining, the flaps were raised and the side tables stood at each end. When large single dining tables were used they did not look cumbersome, despite their size, for they often had tapered and fluted legs on plinth feet (Pl. 17*b*). Towards the end of the century some ingenious devices for extending tables were patented, among the best known of which was Gillow's 'telescopic' dining-table, with sliders that could be drawn out to hold flaps. About this time there were other distinct changes. It was usual for table tops to be supported on two or more columns each with four legs, of the kind known as 'pillar and claw'. The pillars were turned and the claws, which were at the end of curved and reeded legs, were often in the shape of lion paws and made of brass, with castors. Circular tables, similar to those described above, were also found in the dining-room, mounted on a pillar and claw (Pl. 18*a*).

Tripod tables were an important element in large houses after 1760, and were used for a variety of purposes, for tea, as occasional tables, and, in slightly modified forms, as candle stands and firescreens. As tea tables they were in great demand when tea-drinking in public gardens fell into disrepute among fashionable people and was carried on instead in private houses. The tops of these tables were sometimes hinged or, in some cases, could be lifted off their supports. In the neo-classic period the solid carved tops, cabriole legs, and ball-and-claw feet were gradually replaced by inlaid tops and modified forms of the cabriole. Later the tripod legs became very delicate and had clearly-defined concave or convex curves resting on dainty, pointed feet (Pl. 18*b*). In the case of the more elaborate firescreens and candle stands, the legs were longer and sprang

from a small central platform for additional strength.

Bureaux, bookcases, cabinets, etc.

Bureaux followed closely the changes in fashion of the chest of drawers with regard to drawer fronts, feet, etc. Fronts and writing flaps, for instance, were often inlaid with classical designs under Adam's influence. Later in the century a curved apron piece often connected the legs beneath the plinth, and the legs themselves were slender and outward-pointing. About 1800 the writing flap was sometimes replaced by a sliding cylinder or tambour front. This treatment was favoured by Sheraton, who indeed claimed that he had found bureaux 'nearly obsolete in London; at least . . . among fashionable people', but that he had 'endeavoured to retrieve their obscurity by adding to them an open bookcase and modernizing the lower part'. Some of these later bureaux were made with slender legs and a single drawer under the writing section.

Where the bureau had a bookcase the latter often had a clear architectural character, as had larger bookcases, cabinets, and similar pieces. The tops were frequently decorated with a broken pediment—angular, swan-neck or curved—though this was by no means universal, for many cabinet-makers preferred a simple straight cornice. Glazing bars of mahogany were extensively used in the second half of the century, and some very graceful patterns were obtainable. In the Adam period cabinets were venerated with woods of contrasting colours (Pl. 18*c*). Larger pieces of this kind often had a break front, i.e. the central part was made to jut out a little. Shortly after 1800 the traditional design of the bookcase was modified; it was made to a low height so as to leave the walls above free for pictures (Pl. 15*b*).

Mirrors

There were considerable changes in the design of mirrors after 1760. In the middle of the century large mirrors, particularly the pier glasses which stood between windows, were perhaps the best examples of the rococo and Chinese styles in their most intricate and asymmetrical forms. The

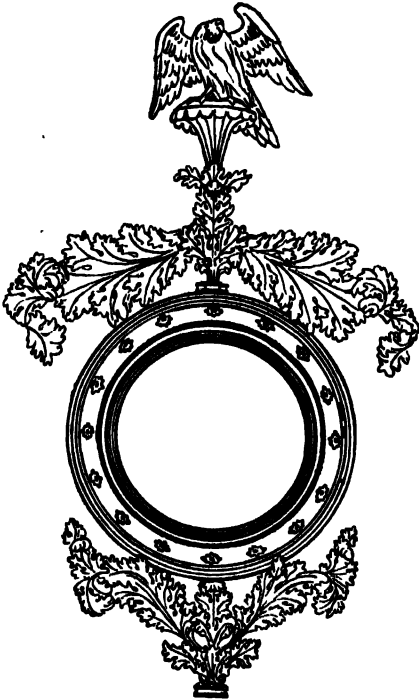


Fig. 9. Circular mirror, about 1800. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

classical revival swept these excesses away. Large glasses now usually had rectangular frames which were carved and gilt with decorations of paterae, honeysuckle and festoons surmounted by an urn, bird, etc. (Pl. 19A). Sometimes the more delicate decoration was carried out by mounting a specially prepared composition on metal threads. Smaller mirrors were oval and rectangular and had narrow frames with surrounds and crests of open work. Carving on frames, however, was soon to be largely replaced by painted decoration.

At the end of the century came another notable change – the general introduction of convex, circular mirrors which had been used in France since the 1750's (and had indeed been illustrated in Ince and Mayhew's *Universal System*). Their

frames, moulded and gilt, had a black (ebonized) fillet on the inside edge near the glass, and a reeded outer edge; the hollows of the moulding contained gilt balls. The favourite cresting above the frame was an eagle on a plinth with acanthus foliage (Fig. 9).

Dressing or toilet mirrors – little mirrors on stands fitted with drawers – provided delightful examples of fine craftsmanship. The frames, of rectangular, oval or shield shapes (Fig. 10) swung on two uprights fitted into the stand, which was often bow- or serpentine-fronted. Taller dressing glasses, known as cheval or, in Sheraton's words, 'horse dressing glasses', stood, as their name implies, on four legs. The uprights followed the prevailing modes of carving, turning or painting, and feet were reeded and curved outwards (Pl. 19B).

Long-case clocks

Though Sheraton described long-case clocks as almost obsolete in his day in London, they were still being made in the late eighteenth century, many of them with walnut veneers when this wood had become unfashionable. After 1760, however, mahogany was increasingly used, and the general tendency was to make the cases broader, the bodies shorter, and the bases heavier, and thus the slender proportions of the earlier japanned and walnut pieces tended to disappear. At first dark mahogany was in vogue, with carving and fretwork, but from about 1770 the emphasis was on finely-figured wood which was often veneered on a carcase of oak, with inlaid or painted classical designs. Small classical columns were also found at the sides of the head, and fluted and reeded pilasters at the front corners of the body. The hood was often surmounted by a broken

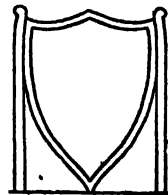


Fig. 10. Toilet mirror, shield shape.

finials (Fig. 11). At the very end of the century there was a distinct break with the traditional design, for some fine pieces had pedestal-shaped bodies, veneered with mahogany or satinwood and inlaid with various woods, and a plainer circular dial in a narrow frame, instead of a hood. An important feature of the period was the great improvement in provincial clock-making. Provincial clocks tended to be even broader than London ones, and many were made of oak.

Other furniture: country

Little enough is known about the furniture in cottages and smaller farmhouses in remoter areas of the country. In many cottages the contents must have been extremely primitive, like those seen in Devon by Louis Simond in 1810-11: 'the floors appear to be a pavement of round stones like the street, - a few seats, in the form of short benches, - a table or two, - a spinning wheel, - a few shelves.' But that cottage furniture of even a simple kind was regarded as a valuable possession is clear from the way it was put to as many uses as possible, and also handed down in the family for generations. Goldsmith, in his poem *The Deserted Village* (1770), wrote of the cottage chest which 'contrived a double debt to pay, a bed by night, a chest of drawers by day'. In the later eighteenth century furniture could be found in rural districts which dated back to early Stuart and Tudor times. In 1761, for example, Horace Walpole wrote: 'Dicky Bateman has picked up a whole cloister full of old chairs in Herefordshire - he bought them one by one, here and there in farmhouses for three and sixpence and a crown apiece. They are of wood, the seats triangular, the backs, arms and legs loaded with turnery. A thousand to one but there are plenty up and down Cheshire too.' Such chairs, collected by Georgian devotees of 'Gothic' furniture, were of a medieval pattern which rural craftsmen had continued to make well into the seventeenth century. It is clear, too, that much of the furniture in country places was made at home. This was true not only of the very poor, but also of people of more substantial station, even of the smaller gentry. At Townend, near Troutbeck, Westmorland, which for several centuries was

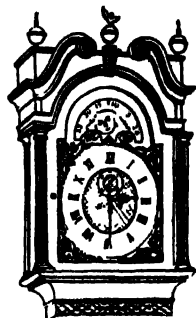


Fig. 11. Clock hood, about 1780. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

the home of a well-to-do yeoman family, the furniture (now under the care of the National Trust) was largely the work of many generations of the family, down to the death of the last of the male line in 1914. It could also happen that some cottages contained furniture of distinctly good quality which was passed on to them from the local manor house where it had been discarded in favour of more fashionable pieces - just as the servants' quarters in large houses might have furniture formerly in the best rooms.

Provincial towns

Provincial towns had their reputable cabinet-makers who could supply all classes in the neighbourhood. Some of these craftsmen, indeed, achieved real distinction, like the Gillow family of Lancaster. Even when this firm opened a branch in London about 1760 the furniture was still made at Lancaster for a time and sent to London by sea. From their Lancaster workshop the family supplied furniture to local magnates in that part of the country - such as the Curwens at Workington Hall - where it would obviously be very difficult to get goods from London. In general, however, the upper classes obtained much of their furniture from the capital, whence, as has been seen, cheap furniture could also be supplied to the lower classes by middlemen. In the latter case, the chief consideration was geographical; most of these cheaper goods seem to have been

shipped from London as part of the coasting trade. Middle-class people in the provinces usually found local sources of supply sufficient. Parson Woodforde, in his famous diary, describes how he obtained some of the furniture for his parsonage at Weston, some ten miles from Norwich. 'Bought this day,' he wrote in November, 1789, 'of William Hart, Cabinet-Maker on Hog Hill, Norwich, 2 large second hand double-flapped Mohogany Tables, also one second hand Mohogany dressing Table with Drawers, also one new Mohogany Washing-Stand, for all which paid £4.14.6, that is, for the 2 Tables £2.12.6, Dressing Table £1.11.6, Mohogany Wash-stand £0.10.6.' Later, in April, 1793, he noted: 'About 2 o'clock this Afternoon two Men of Sudbury's at Norwich came with my Side-Board and a large New Mohogany Cellaret bought of Sudbury, brought on the Men's Shoulders all the way and very safe.'⁷ This last entry is a comment on the state of the country roads at that time.

London

With regard to the furniture used by the lower and lower-middle classes in London, there are only scanty records. A pamphlet of 1767, however, gives the contents of a furnished room rented at half a crown a week by an unmarried clerk in a public office who, with a salary of £50 a year, is described as 'in a middling Station'. The room has 'a half tester bedstead, with brown linsey woolsey furniture, a bed and bolster, half flock, half feathers . . . a small wainscot table, two old chairs with cane bottoms, a small looking-glass six inches by four in a deal frame painted red and black, a red linsey woolsey window curtain'.⁸ In considering furniture of this sort it is important to remember the cramped living conditions of many Londoners at that time. Lack of cheap transport kept most workers to the immediate vicinity of their places of work. Very many of them lived in furnished rooms as weekly ten-

ants, and even the comparatively small group who reached the superior status of householders normally lived in only part of their houses and let the rest to lodgers. Landlords stocked furnished rooms with much old-fashioned furniture, and those tenants who had to provide their own furniture often bought it by weekly instalments – an old practice which remained popular right through the century. Naturally, better-class tenants could count on improved conditions. C. Moritz, a foreigner who travelled in England in 1782, wrote with appreciation of the room he had rented in London: 'I now occupy a large room in front on the ground floor, which has a carpet and mats, and is very neatly furnished; the chairs are covered with leather, and the tables are of mahogany.'⁹

This crowded way of life explains the development of what Martin in 1813 called 'the fashion of the day, to resort to a number of contrivances for making one piece of furniture serve many purposes'. The cabinet-makers' design books, which came out after 1760, had many examples of ingeniously-contrived, space-saving furniture. Some pieces of this kind were patented, such as Eckhardt's portable table and chair (1771), and Gale's bedstead which could close to look like a bookcase or wardrobe (1772). Closely related to the making of this fitted-in furniture was that of invalid furniture, in which some cabinet-makers specialized. In the early nineteenth century, for instance, Pococks of Covent Garden advertized ten different sorts of invalid furniture, including 'Patent Sympathetic and Self-Acting Dining Tables, Patent Boethema or Rising Mattresses, Merlin's Reading and Gouty Chairs, and Patent Sofa Beds'¹⁰ (Pl. 20A).

Ships' furniture

Another line of furniture-making which is often overlooked, but which was an important one in that period of naval and commercial activity and of emigration, was the fitting up of ships'

⁷ *The Diary of a Country Parson* (ed. J. Beresford, 1924–31).

⁸ Considerations on the Expediency of Raising . . . the Wages of Servants that are not Domestic, particularly Clerks in Public Offices (B.M.T. 152/4, 1767).

⁹ C. Moritz, *Travels in England in 1782* (1924 reprint of trans. of 1795).

¹⁰ This advertisement appears among Foreign Office archives for Spain, 1814 (Pub. Record Office, F.O. 185/50); some of the pieces may have been used by army officers.

cabins. Some ships were very handsomely furnished. In 1768 William Hickey described the cabin of the third mate of the *Plassey* at Gravesend as 'neatness itself and most elegantly fitted up. It was painted of light pea green, with gold beading, the bed and curtains of the richest Madras chintz, one of the most complete dressing tables I ever saw, having every useful article in it; a beautiful bureau and bookcase . . . and three neat mahogany chairs, formed the furniture.'¹¹ This was the cabin of an officer in the merchant navy. In the Royal Navy the chief officers had good, attractive furniture designed for hard wear. Mahogany furniture, once belonging to Captain Cook, Lord Nelson and other officers can still be seen at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Nelson's cabin on board the *Victory* contained (as recounted by Miss Carola Oman) two black leather arm-chairs (lashed together, when necessary as a couch), an ottoman, folding bedstead, dining table, circular pedestal tables, other chairs, a sideboard, tallboy, washstand – all of mahogany.¹²

Cabin furniture was an important item for emigrants, for they normally hired only cabin space on board, and then bought furniture which they could take on shore with them. This was a regular practice with all emigrants to the colonies. In 1821 P. Cherry wrote from India to his three

daughters who were intending to leave England for Madras: 'Your cabin furniture, if it has no other recommendation, is English, and will always have a value in proportion to your length of absence from England. I have now most of my cabin furniture which I bought in 1811.' He said the following were essential for the voyage: 'Two or three small bureaus with bookshelves on them, two or three sea couches with drawers to convert into sofas in the day-time, a wash-hand stand . . . a foot-tub and three chairs.'¹³ The cabinet-maker's side of all this may be best summarized by quoting the trade card of Thomas Butler of the Strand, about 1800: 'Bed Furniture and Mattresses calculated for the East and West Indies. Ship Cabbins furnished. Articles particularly adapted and for Travelling and Exportation.'¹⁴

REFERENCES. Two indispensable works for a study of this period are the *Dictionary of English Furniture* by P. MacQuoid and R. Edwards (3 vols., revised edition by R. Edwards, 1954), and *Georgian Cabinet-Makers* by R. Edwards and M. Jourdain (revised edition 1955). The quotations from Hepplewhite and Sheraton in the text are taken from, respectively, the *Guide* (1788) and the *Cabinet Dictionary* (1803), except Sheraton's reference to writing tables (from the *Drawing Book*, 1791-4).

¹¹ Quoted by Sir M. Malcolm, *Annals of an Anglo-Indian Family* (undated).

¹² Sir A. Heal, *London Furniture Makers, 1660-1840* (1953).

¹¹ *Memoirs of William Hickey* (ed. A. Spencer, 1913).

¹² C. Oman, *Nelson* (1950).



Wood engraving by Richard Austin for Bell & Stephenson's 'Type Specimen, 1789.

JOHN LACEY,
Cabinet and Chair-Maker,

IN CHEAP-STREET, FROME,

Makes in a neat Manner, and sells at a low Price,

ALL SORTS of

Cabinet Goods

A L S O

**Sells common, round, and quartered Ash and Elder
Chairs, white and coloured, from eight to forty
Shillings per Dozen.**

The printed handbill of a late eighteenth-century provincial craftsman. From R. W. Symonds' *Furniture Making in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England*.

Painting and Sculpture

Painting and Sculpture

HUGH HONOUR

'Our eloquence and the glory of our arms have been carried to the highest pitch. The more peaceful arts have in other countries generally attended national glory. If there are any talents among us, this seems the crisis for their appearance: the Throne itself is now the altar of the graces, and whoever sacrifices to them becomingly, is sure that his offerings will be smiled upon by a Prince, who is at once the example and patron of accomplishments' (Horace Walpole in the preface to *The Anecdotes of Painting*, 1760).

It was with such high hopes that the artistic world of London greeted the accession of George III, and although royal patronage was to fall short of Horace Walpole's expectation, his prophecy was in the main fulfilled. It is sufficient to mention the names of the principal artists of the period to show that it was indeed the golden age of English painting and sculpture – Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, Stubbs and Romney were all at the height of their powers, as were also the water-colourists J. R. Cozens and Thomas Girtin, and the sculptors Wilton, Banks and Nollekens. The first few years of the period were illuminated by the sunset of Hogarth, Thomas Hudson, Allan Ramsay and the trio of anglicized sculptors, Roubiliac, Rysbrack and Scheemakers. The first few years of the nineteenth century saw the rise of Lawrence, Raeburn, Constable, Blake, Turner and Flaxman, who had already begun to make their personalities felt. Indeed, it would not be too much to say that all but a handful of the greatest English artists worked during the long reign of George III.

For the history of English painting, no less

than for the painters themselves, the most important event in the period was the foundation of the Royal Academy. Such an institution for the establishment of the 'rules' of high art is, of course, a necessary adjunct of any classical period; but the forces which brought about the foundation of the Academy in England were perhaps social as much as artistic, and it reflects the decline of aristocratic patronage and the rise of a much more diffuse and less homogeneous class of patrons. It is unnecessary to repeat here the tedious history of the jealousies and squabbles which marked the earliest years of the Royal Academy. '*Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*' Suffice it to say that a group of artists who had exhibited works at the Foundling Hospital held a larger exhibition in the rooms of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in 1760. This exhibition was a resounding success and gave rise to three rival bodies: the Free Society of Artists of Great Britain which petered out in 1779, the Society of Artists which was incorporated by Royal charter in 1765 and lasted until 1791, and the Royal Academy itself which was founded in 1768 under the presidency of Reynolds. All three institutions held annual exhibitions but gradually the leading exhibitors deserted from the other societies to the Royal Academy where all the most important painters save Romney were to exhibit at some time. The Royal Academy was largely responsible for raising the status of artists above that of mere tradesmen or craftsmen; its banquets were attended by members of the Royal Family, by diplomats and politicians – a far cry from the jovial carousings

of the old artists' clubs. Its schools gave students a good academic grounding with the opportunity to draw from the nude or from a collection of casts such as had previously been available for study only to those with the *entrée* to houses of great collectors. But, above all, its annual exhibitions gave artists the opportunity of studying each others' works and provided them with a shop window in which to show their performances, thus helping to free them from the old system of patronage and the tyranny of the picture dealer. Whereas the majority of pictures had formerly been painted to fulfil commissions, the Academy, and the other societies, opened up a much wider market enabling artists to exhibit history pictures, fancy scenes or landscapes on the chance of finding a purchaser or attracting sufficient interest to justify the publication of engravings.

Much as the artists complained of lack of patronage, especially for large history pictures, the sheer quantity of paintings, particularly portraits and cabinet pieces, produced during this period, is witness to the demand from new and more modest patrons who sought pictures to complete the furnishing of a small town or country house. So widespread became this demand for 'art' that an unprecedented quantity of engravings were produced to satisfy the voracious appetites of those unable to afford the price of an original painting. Engravings had always been bought by collectors, indeed, as Strutt remarked, 'almost every man of taste is in some degree a collector of prints', but their importance in the history of English painting has never been justly appreciated. They served as advertisements for the painter, spreading his fame far beyond the country house to the trim villa of the provincial lawyer or prosperous tradesman. Mezzotints, stipple and line engravings of the famous beauties of the day, of notable politicians, of scenes from recent history or of fancy pictures found their way into all but the humblest of homes. Their vogue made the painting of modern histories a profitable business and Benjamin West is said to have made as much as £15,000 out of Woollett's engravings of his *Death of Wolfe*. Indeed, artists such as M. W. Peters and Francis Wheatley must frequently have

worked with one eye on the burin very much as novelists of today write with one eye on Hollywood. In this way engravings made it possible for painters to cater for a wider public than that represented by the purchasers of original pictures.

Taste and patronage

Nevertheless, the most eminent painters of the day were working for a clearly defined and limited market and their paintings reflect the taste of their wealthy patrons to the same extent as the great houses that were springing up throughout the country and the furniture that was produced for them. The size of rooms still made large pictures fashionable and whole length portraits, always favoured in England, were turned out in great quantity. But the chaster style of interior decoration introduced by the Adam brothers limited the art of the purely decorative painter to the small roundels of the ceiling, occasional panels in the wall and, more rarely, views of imaginary architecture, supplied by Biagio Rebecca, Angelica Kauffman and her prolific husband Antonio Zucchi. The titanic gods whose athletic amours had decorated many a wall and ceiling in the earlier part of the century gave place to simpering personifications and pretty prospects of ruins. The Adams were also responsible for the conception of a room as a whole with every part in concert from the ceiling to the carpet and from the chimney-piece to the door knob, and pictures must needs fit into this all-embracing scheme. Great portraits by Reynolds and Gainsborough were designed for the grand salon, fancy pieces for the boudoir, history pictures for the gallery; and it is pertinent to note that when these works are removed from their setting the pictures, no less than the rooms, lose much of their beauty and significance. Similarly, Reynolds' portraits of his literary friends, and Gainsborough's of his musical cronies, were intended for the more modest apartments of the town, and the provincial artist's style was adapted to the requirements of the minor country house, reflecting its greater solidity and less elegant refinement. The period is marked by the existence of a number of good provincial artists who, like Joseph Wright

of Derby, worked mainly for the patronage of their district.

Although, as we have already observed, patronage was by no means confined to members of the upper class, their influence remained predominant none the less. 'This was the great age of the Grand Tour when every young man of good family was expected to have spent some months in Italy where, under the supervision of some bear-leader or guided by a seldom altruistic cicerone, he made a nodding acquaintance with the arts which stood him in good stead for conversation on his return. His more lowly contemporaries were inclined to ape his pronouncements until, as reported by an anonymous writer of 1775, 'even the lowest people tell familiarly of Hannibal Scratchi, Paul Varnish and Raphael Angelo'. Painters consequently emulated the styles of the most popular Italians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in both portraits and history pieces, though they seldom impressed the newly returned *macaroni* who, like Sterne's critic, would remark of them that they contained 'nothing of the colouring of Titian, the expression of Rubens, the grace of Raphael, the purity of Dominichino, the *correggescity* of Correggio, the learning of Poussin, the airs of Guido, the taste of the Carrachis or the grand contour of Angelo'. It was at such moments that Sir Joshua 'shifted his trumpet and only took snuff'; though no one was a more enthusiastic admirer of these artists, and the standard of taste in old masters is nowhere better expressed than in the *Discourses* he delivered each year to the students of the Royal Academy. The Italianized taste of the aristocracy, which was also, of course, the official policy of the Royal Academy throughout this period, is displayed to perfection in Zoffany's *Tribune of the Uffizi* (Pl. 21A) in to which he has crammed all those objects and paintings which the patron coveted and the artist emulated.

As the tourist admired only the classical sculptures and old master paintings in Italy, so did the painter. Contemporary foreign artists were generally considered of little account save for Pompeo Batoni, the most elegant and expensive portrait painter in Europe; Canaletto, who had nearly disgraced himself in the eyes of Taste by stepping

on English soil; Zuccarelli, who came to England in this period but appears to have retained his Italian integrity, and A. R. Mengs who was more popular for his portraits than his history pictures. Batoni's influence may be discerned in the work of Ramsay, Nathaniel Dance and even to a slight degree in Reynolds himself, but the others made little impression on English painting in this period. The neo-classic style, which may owe as much to the Scottish Gavin Hamilton as to Mengs, found comparatively little favour in these isles. Hamilton did contrive to insinuate some of his vast canvasses into otherwise immaculate British houses but he had to make their purchase a condition of sale for classical sculptures and old masters. In sculpture, however, neo-classicism enjoyed uninhibited popularity because it emulated the style of the most admired statuary of the past, directly reflecting the taste of the collector.

Partly by his own inclination, and partly to cater for the taste of his patron, the English artist seeking the best market for his works modelled himself on the masters of the cinquecento and the seicento. He might also turn to seventeenth century Dutch painting which was ranked second only to Italian, and it seems likely that Gainsborough, Stubbs and, towards the end of his career, Reynolds, imbibed some inspiration from this quarter. As the reign of George III progressed, however, members of the untravelling middle classes began to grow in importance as patrons, desiring less of the grand manner but greater sentiment and truth to nature as they saw it; consequently small *genre* pieces and English landscapes became more popular. Whereas the great patron would demand grandiose portraits and, on rare occasions, such history pieces as might be mistaken for old masters in a bad light, the less wealthy wanted more intimate works; and, of course, the sporting pictures which were the particular joy of the squirearchy.

The price of pictures

In order to give some idea of the markets for which painters catered, and before proceeding to a more general account of the trends of taste in the period, a word should be said of the prices

charged. When Romney was travelling round the north of England as an itinerant face painter, between 1757 and 1762, he is said to have received two guineas for a head and six for a whole length. At the same time Reynolds was charging 25 guineas for a head and 100 for a whole length and had doubled these prices by 1779 when he was the best paid portrait painter in England. Gainsborough's prices were slightly below those of Reynolds and in 1786 he was charging 40 guineas for a head and 160 for a whole length. Once he was established Romney charged 15 guineas for a head and 60 for a whole length and had doubled these prices by 1793, when Beechey was asking the same and the young Lawrence could already obtain as much as Gainsborough at the height of his power. The prices asked for subject pictures were more variable; Reynolds obtained 50 guineas each for the little *Shepherd Boy* and the *Strawberry Girl*, but got £200 for *The Death of Dido*, 700 guineas for a replica of *Mrs Siddons as the Tragic Muse* (Pl. 21c) and 1,500 guineas for *The Infant Hercules* which was sold to Catherine the Great – he bought Gainsborough's *Girl with Pigs* (Pl. 28a) in 1782 for 100 guineas. In 1770 West was charging £300 for a history painting 'not too large to hang over a chimney' and some twenty years later Opie received 100 guineas for his *Ruth*. These are not small figures and are some indication of the prosperity enjoyed by the most popular artists, though not all – towards the end of his life Wilson considered himself lucky if he could obtain 15 guineas for a landscape. By way of comparison, it is worth recording a few of the prices paid for old masters. At Sir Luke Schaub's sale in 1758 a Claude fetched £105 and a Raphael £703; forty years later at the sale of the Orleans collection the top price of 4,000 guineas was paid for Annibale Caracci's *Descent from the Cross*, 3,500 for the *Raising of Lazarus* by Sebastino del Piombo and 3,000 for a *Virgin* by Raphael.

Literary influences

It is not necessary to indulge in elaborate comparisons between the oratory of Burke and the grand portraits of Reynolds, or between Gibbons's

attitude to history and the paintings of Copley, to see how the main tendencies in literature were paralleled in the painting of the period. White's *Natural History of Selborne* and Gray's diaries have in their scientific observation of nature an obvious parallel in the animal paintings of Stubbs. The spirit of nationalism, which was an important force in the Gothic Revival, was characterized by an increased interest in the earlier English writers and a growing preference for the native landscape adorned by gothic rather than classical ruins – tastes which are clearly expressed in the history pictures and the landscapes of the day. The popularity of Macpherson's *Ossian* was mainly based on the pleasing supposition that he supplied the want of a British Homer, and he was commemorated in painting and sculpture. *Ossian's* appeal was also due to a curiously remote cult of the simple life, the ideal, the unspoiled barbarian, the noble savage indeed, who was depicted in his own exotic surroundings by William Hodges and was personified in Omai whom Sir Joshua Reynolds painted on more than one occasion.

Above all, the cult of Sensibility pervaded a period in which Richardson's novels were read with tearful affection – not to mention Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1765), Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) and, most lachrymose of all, Henry Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (1771). Novelists and poets indulged a pleasing melancholy strain and invited the tear over descriptions of descents from greatness to misery, ruins (real or artificial), wild landscapes, children and the short and simple annals of the rustic poor. In an age when weeping was a mark of refinement and a young woman might die from excessive sensibility, it is hardly surprising that the dewy-eyed Magdalene of Guido Reni should have been among the most popular of pictures. The influence of sensibility on art is to be discerned in many a rugged, gloomy or mellifluously sweet landscape, in views of towering ivy-clad ruins, the resort of moping owls, and in scenes from recent history – the death of Wolfe (Pl. 30a) in the hour of triumph or of Chatham 'heart sick for his country's shame' – or in *genre* pictures of rustic groups which 'only nature could have supplied and taste and sensi-

bility selected' (to quote the words of Martin Archer Shee on Gainsborough's *Girl with Pigs*). Even in a picture of a scientific experiment – *The Bird in the Air Pump* – Joseph Wright of Derby introduced figures of children to shed innocent tears. With the notable exception of Stubbs, no successful painters in this period failed to succumb at some time to a literary taste which they no doubt enjoyed as much as their patrons.

The trends of taste apparent in the paintings of the half century under consideration can receive only the most cursory treatment in a brief survey. It is a subject much complicated by the fact that most painters indulged in the expression of more than one artistic fashion and tried their hands at nearly every *genre*. Reynolds and Gainsborough painted both grand and informal portraits, landscapes and fancy pictures; Romney hankered after history painting and Barry, all too rarely, painted portraits. In an article which is devoted to the place of English paintings in the home rather than to criticism or biographies of artists, it seems most convenient to treat the subject by *genres* – portraits, fancy pictures, landscapes, animal paintings and histories.

Portraiture

Portraiture retained its popularity throughout this period, and although artists were prone to complain of its drudgery few were so high-minded as to despise its rewards. Considered as essential for the decoration of a great house by the aristocracy, and as the first emblems of gentility by the bourgeoisie, portraits might be found in practically every house that contained pictures; and the artists, from Reynolds in London to the now forgotten journeymen in the provinces, worked hard to satisfy an ever-increasing demand. As early as 1759 Reynolds is known to have had some 150 sitters, and Gainsborough painted more than 700 portraits in the course of his career. Much as Reynolds hankered after history, as Gainsborough longed to escape to some remote village where he could settle down to landscape, or as Romney wished to realize the grandiose projects he sketched, all three were most admired and are best remembered as portrait painters.

In 1760 Reynolds was well established in London where his only rival was Allan Ramsay who had recently returned from Rome with a brand-new style based on the French pastellists and Pompeo Batoni. But although Ramsay painted some of his best portraits during the first nine years of this period, most of his time was consumed by uncongenial, though no doubt remunerative, royal commissions, and in 1769 he retired altogether from the scene. The year 1760 is of singular importance in Reynolds' career, for with the portrait of *The Duchess of Hamilton as Venus* he marked his change from the intimate to the grand manner. In the fond hope of deflecting the taste of his patrons from portraiture to 'history' he dressed his female sitters in classical garments, placed them in the attitudes of Michelangelo or Albano and sought to draw the general out of the particular. In his use of 'timeless' costume he attracted few followers, though Francis Cotes once surpassed himself and nearly equalled Sir Joshua in this manner (Pl. 24b). After 1765, when Reynolds exhibited the most remorselessly classical of all his portraits – *Lady Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces* – he seems to have realized that the British public would not be dictated to in such a fashion and he resorted to a less artificial but no less magniloquent style. But he never condescended to the ephemeral dictates of the *modiste* and he was consequently able to portray the fashionable hostess of the moment, like Lady Hertford (Pl. 24a), *en grande tenue* as a beauty of all time. In portraits of men he resorted to fewer devices for his sharp psychological penetration enabled him to paint into them such strength of character as would transcend the bounds of time (Pl. 23). The friend of *litterati* rather than painters, he was ideally suited to depict the great men of his age, and he painted them with such force that we can now see them only through his eyes. But Reynolds could descend from his dais, dropping the grand manner and his tone of high seriousness when occasion offered: he could even laugh at his high-flown pretensions, as witness the charming parody of his own grand manner in the portrait of *Master Crews as Henry VIII or Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy*. His range was

indeed enormous, much wider than has sometimes been supposed. He was very much more than the 'official' portrait painter of his age, and his success in his own day, no less than his enduring fascination, resided in his variety – 'Damn him,' said Gainsborough, 'how various he is.' He could adapt his style and composition to depict with equal felicity the robust and vigorous admiral or the elegant and diaphanous *belle*, tender and melting motherhood or hard and glittering urbanity.

In 1774 Thomas Gainsborough moved from Bath to London where he could more effectively challenge Reynolds' position as the leading portrait painter of the day. Never before or since has English society been served by two artists so great and so complementary. Whereas Reynolds was a painter of intellect, Gainsborough was of feeling; Reynolds the master of substance and pose, Gainsborough of fleeting effects of light. Gainsborough's more exquisite, more feminine talent, his delicious creamy paint, his fine draughtsmanship and his transformation scene effects will never lack admirers, especially among those who find it difficult to appreciate Reynolds' subtlety. Moreover, Gainsborough could be no less effective than Reynolds in the grand manner as is evinced by the magnificent state portrait of the Duke of Argyll (Pl. 22) in which he has firmly grasped the forceful character of his sitter, presenting an image of great power and solidity which is in no way weakened by his delight in the beauty and variety of the textures of his robes, painted, as always, with the utmost virtuosity, in a shimmering pattern of brilliant flicks and blobs of paint. The strength, weight and solidity of this portrait (dating from 1767) was not often to be recaptured for Gainsborough gradually succumbed to the fascination of textures and surface effects so that his figures became increasingly wraith-like and insubstantial. Enamoured as he was of silk and satins, Gainsborough rarely forewent the pleasure of painting his sitters' costumes himself; his canvasses are therefore seldom marred by the mechanical touch of the 'drapery painter' or studio assistant, and every part of his best portraits is from his own hand and of equal artistic merit.

Those who desired neither the elevation of

Reynolds nor the shimmering evanescence of Gainsborough might, after 1773, employ George Romney, who was born to be the fashionable portrait painter *par excellence*. He could always be relied upon to produce a good likeness, and sometimes displayed a keen insight into character as in his capital portraits of the young Etonian, Lord Grey (Pl. 25), the disillusioned ageing statesman, Warren Hastings, or the elegant young couple setting out to inspect their estate (Pl. 63p). Eminently professional, his work generally smells too much of the studio, and even when painting his *femme fatale*, Emma Hart (later Lady Hamilton) he appears thin-blooded and coldly calculating. Despite his charm and accomplishment, it is difficult for us now to understand how the London of 1783 could be of two factions, Reynolds' and Romney's.

Towards the end of his career Romney was rivalled by John Hoppner and William Beechey, both of whom catered for more humdrum sitters and produced portraits which appeal to us now mainly as period pieces. They had a sharp eye for fashion in dress and *toilette* which endowed their female sitters with a certain charm, though they occasionally made them look as if they might at any moment fall prey to excessive sensibility. A more lively note was struck by the arch-realist J. S. Copley, who painted the sparkling rococo group of *The Three Princesses* (Pl. 24c).

Before leaving the subject of portraiture a word should be said of the pastelists who enjoyed a considerable vogue until the 'nineties, when the most notable, John Russell, who had in his heyday commanded prices as high as Reynolds, was forced to tour the provinces in search of sitters. He executed a vast number of portraits, some of which show a refined sensitivity and all of which are characterized by an admirable respect for his medium. Francis Cotes, William Hoare, Ozias Humphrey and Daniel Gardner were also prominent portraitists in pastel.

John Zoffany

The taste for conversation piece portraits, which was well established before the period began, was given new impetus by the arrival in

England of John Zoffany. With his almost photographic technique which enabled him to reproduce the minutiae of fashionable clothes and interior decoration as if seen through a quiz-glass, he won immediate popularity and went to Florence to paint the *Tribune of the Uffizi* (Pl. 21A). 'This picture delights us now as an amusing and authoritative epitome of the current taste in pictures no less than as an illustration of the Grand Tour, while his equally delightful painting of Charles Townley among his 'marbles' affords an intimate view of the *virtuoso* at home. Other artists who worked in this *genre* included Francis Wheatley and Arthur Devis.

Fancy pictures

Sir Joshua Reynolds found it hard to determine whether Gainsborough had 'most excelled in portraits, landscapes or Fancy pictures' but confessed himself to have been captivated by 'the interesting simplicity and elegance of his ordinary little beggar children'. The first of Gainsborough's fancy pictures to be exhibited appeared in the Academy of 1781 and, although it does not seem to have won the approval of the *cognoscenti*, it made a great impression on the artists. Reynolds later bought his *Girl with Pigs* (Pl. 28B) and essayed the same style in his *Strawberry Girl* and *Shepherd Boy*. Within a few years the exhibitions were abundantly supplied with little scenes of rustic innocence which made an immediate appeal to the urban middle classes. Of the many artists who worked in this *genre*, Francis Wheatley was probably the most successful but none was more ruthless than George Morland (Pl. 28C) in his exploitation of the nostalgia for a rural society that was already vanishing, for a poverty more picturesque, if no less miserable, than that of the town. The *genre* scenes of John Opie, the Cornish Wonder (Pl. 29A), are less densely clouded by the romantic attitude to rustic life, the harsh reality of which he had experienced in person.

Closely connected with fancy pictures, illustrations of scenes from contemporary literature also enjoyed a wide popularity. The most interesting artist in this vein was Joseph Wright of Derby, who extracted incidents from Sterne's *Sentimental*

Journey, and from the poems of Hayley, Langhorne and Beattie, whose Edwin would sometimes emit 'a sigh, a tear so sweet, he wish'd not to controul'. Although Wright lived solely in Derby, he exhibited regularly in London and never appears to have lacked patronage for his pictures, or a market for prints after them. The source for one of his more remarkable works, *Miravan Opening the Tomb of his Ancestors* (Pl. 28A) has never been identified but it takes place in the vault of some neo-classical castle – of Otranto or Udolpho – and is a curious mixture of all the fashionable tendencies of the time. John Hamilton Mortimer also painted pictures of a literary character, but specialized in *banditti* which were thought to challenge comparison with Salvator Rosa. A less gloomy figure, the Rev. Mathew William Peters, painted little pictures of a faintly *risqué* nature, illustrated such passages from Shakespeare as could include simpering femininity; and finally, after he had taken orders, turned to religious paintings in the style of Mengs. He too was widely popularized by stipple engravings and mezzotints.

Landscape

Like fancy pictures, landscapes owed their patronage mainly to the rising middle class who seem to have appreciated them for their content rather than for their truth to nature. Consequently Gainsborough found that he could make his landscapes saleable only by the introduction of figures – on one occasion he copied his pig girl group into the middle distance. His landscapes of this period are characterized by a sweet lyricism, a feeling for gently undulating country and an appearance of naturalism, though many were painted from little arrangements of moss and pebbles in his studio. They are, in fact, subtle evocations of the English scene rather than accurate delineations of it, and it would frequently be hard to identify his trees, let alone his grasses. Nor was Richard Wilson a greater respecter of topography except when engaged in painting the 'portrait' of a country house in the Claudian setting of its landscaped park. Too much an artist to resort to a purely topographical technique

and too stoical to indulge the tear of sensibility, he fell between the two stools of the accepted landscape tradition. It is significant that his most successful picture showed Niobe in a wild setting of rocks, and that it brought in £2,000 for Woollett the engraver. His views of the English or Welsh scene (Pl. 26A) are carefully composed, flooded with Italian light and exquisitely restrained; but they were hardly calculated to appeal to the man of feeling who wished to indulge sweet melancholy over a ruin or be chilled into a pleasing horror by a mountain. Wilson was too classical, and thus out of tune with his age which allowed him to die in poverty. It is remarkable and, indeed, unaccountable that his works should have been sought after within a decade of his death, since when his reputation has steadily increased until it reached its present height (a Wilson now fetches more in the London art market than a capital piece by his master Claude).

George Barrett, a man of sound common sense with an eye for the picturesque possibilities of a real scene, produced just what his patrons wanted, and succeeded as a prose Wilson. Artists like Michelangelo Rooker were able to extract the most from a crumbling ivy-clad ruin, and Thomas Patch could do the same for such an Italian scene as *The Falls of Terni*. The Smith brothers of Chichester adapted the Dutch style to the English landscape and achieved a considerable success, both through their paintings and the prints after them. Towards the end of our period Julius Caesar Ibbetson showed himself an adept of the sweet pastoral scene or the wild romantic landscape, the ideals of which are clearly expressed in his picture of a *Phaeton in a Thunderstorm* (Pl. 29A) in which he has made use of every device to accentuate the melodrama – lowering clouds, beetling crags, savage country and a modish vehicle involved in a horrifying incident.

Watercolour

No outline of landscape painting in the late eighteenth century would be complete without some mention of those in watercolour, a medium particularly well suited to the delicate tonality of the English countryside. Watercolours enjoyed

popularity first as topographical records and then as independent works of art. One of the leading practitioners of the medium, Paul Sandby, was employed by the equivalent of the Ordnance Survey Department. Francis Towne, who is a discovery of recent years, was known in his own time, if he was known at all, as a meticulous and uninspired painter of country house prospects in oils, but his delicate watercolours or tinted drawings, in which mountain scenes were reduced to a series of plane surfaces (Pl. 27A) were representative of a trend in the attitude to landscape. His purely linear method is in contrast to the style of John Robert Cozens whose romantic approach, emphasized by smoky washes which endowed his works with a depth and mystery (Pl. 27A), made an appeal to such men of taste as William Beckford. In 1794 Cozens went out of his mind and was cared for by Dr Thomas Monro, an able amateur draughtsman, the friend of Gainsborough and the patron of Thomas Girtin, J. M. W. Turner and John Varley. Until his early death in 1802, Girtin may well have appeared the most promising of these young artists and his brilliant use of glowing transparent colours prepares us for the mature work of Turner in the nineteenth century, though his attitude to landscape was entirely of his age (Pl. 27C). John Varley occasionally came near him in his large views of Wales but clung more closely to the topographical tradition.

Animal painting

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century it is hard to separate landscape from sporting painting, for until his death in 1756 John Wootton had been pre-eminent in both genres. His successor, George Stubbs, was primarily a painter of animals, and as such he was considered beyond the pale of the Royal Academy until 1780, when he had distinguished himself by exhibiting history pictures and portrait groups. But although he was neglected by the grand theorists, he seems to have attracted a wide and, no doubt, profitable patronage. By scientific investigation he came to a full understanding of the anatomy not only of the horse but of man, all domestic and some wild



(a) Giovanni Battista Piranesi's 'The Palace of the Uffizi' (c. 1765) is reproduced in various versions of *Uffizi* in Rome, some up the sophisticated taste of the age which found expression in such works as: (b) Johann Neumann's 'The Palace of the Uffizi' (1767) (Rome and other views, which is based on a Roman group, and (c) the Johann Neumann's 'The Palace of the Uffizi' (1768) (The Uffizi of Oxford College, which is derived from a sketch by Michelangelo).



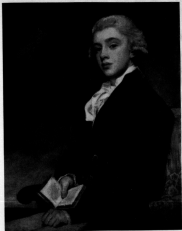
Thomas Gainsborough, "John, 4th Duke of Argyll" (1781).
The National Gallery of Scotland.



Sir James Barry, "Lord Houghton" (1789),
The National Gallery



The scene for the *Neide* and *Grand* as displayed in two portraits: (a) *She Is a Beauty* (1780); (b) *People Never Know Love* and (c) *Princesses' Love* (1780). A further scene is shown by (d) J. N. Goussier's *The Three Princesses* (1780). (Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Gallery, London.)



Giovanni Remondini, 'Charles Grey, afterwards Earl Grey' (1784).
The Portrait and Pedestal at Eton College.



[14] Bernard Wason, 'Pembroke Town and Castle' (1754).
The National Museum of Wales.



[15] Giovanni Stanetti, 'Landscape with a Gentleman holding his Horse' (c. 1790).
The Tate Gallery.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Water without Landscapes:
(a) J. B. Clouet, 'Astoria' (c. 1790), (b) Francis Turner, 'The Vale of St John' (1786), and (c) Thomas Gainsborough, 'Rippon Millstream' (1780), each City and Valley.



a



b

The literary motif for suitability as expressed in (a) Joanna Whiston's *Minerva opening the Fountains of her Abundance* (1779) (Edinburgh City Art Gallery); (b) Thomas Gainsborough's *The Girl with Pigs* (1782) (Edinburgh City Art Gallery); (c) Gainsborough's *Peasants Buying Horses* (1794) (Edinburgh City Art Gallery).





(c) Jean-Claude Lorraine, 'A Plague in a Thunderstorm' (1726).
Los Angeles Art Gallery.



(d) Jean-Claude Lorraine, 'A Peasant Family' (1726-27).
The Art Gallery.



(a) JAMES BARRY, 'The Foundation of the Royal Society of Arts' (1771-82).
Royal Society of Arts.



(b) The engraving by WILLIAM WOODCUT (1758) of 'The Death of Wolfe', painted
in 1758 by Benjamin West. *Picture Post Library.*



6



The contrast between the naturalistic and the neo-classical treatment of "Memory" is shown by (a) J. B. Crowe's "Death of Major Pearson" (1885); (b) "The Agony of Jesus" and (c) John Ruskin's marble relief, "Edward and Eleanor" (1888).



b

(a) THOMAS STOTHARD, 'The Falling Titan' (1780), *The Perseus and the Centaur of the Royal Academy*. (b) JAMES BUNN, 'George III' (1775), reproduced by gracious permission of R.M. de Oude. (c) JAMES NEALANDER, 'Lancaster Square' (1780), *The National Portrait Gallery*. (d) CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE, 'Charles Hamilton' (1784), by permission of the University of Glasgow.



c



d



e

animals; his curiosity also led him to study flora and enabled him to paint trees and grasses with accuracy. But his painting was characterized by something more than truth to nature, as may be seen from the subtle pattern of curves he derived from a horse, a man and a dog (Pl. 268). Moreover, one feels that he painted men and beasts to emphasize the greater magnificence and beauty of the animal. In the history of English art he is an isolated figure, for he founded no school of animal painting and his influence is most notable in the work of Constable and the French romantics.

The nineteenth-century school of sporting and animal painting derives from Sawrey Gilpin, a younger and less able painter than Stubbs, who was also forced to exhibit histories in order to win the recognition of the Academicians. Lacking Stubbs' anatomical knowledge and feeling for supple line, he had a great liveliness and was the formative influence on Ben Marshall and James Ward, whose work was begun before the end of this period but belongs stylistically to the next. Gilpin stands above the general run of sporting painters of the time, notably the Sartorius tribe, whose paintings of Derby and St Leger winners, reproduced in countless prints, graced the walls of the horsier country houses.

History painting

Mention of the history paintings of Stubbs and Gilpin bring us to the form of art which, at some time, seems to have excited the ambition of nearly every artist of importance in this period. The belief that History was a higher form of art than portraiture or landscape had been established earlier in the century, and Reynolds gave it further encouragement in his *Discourses*, though his own eclectic, not to say plagiaristic, works in this vein had little but prestige value. Without the patronage of great institutions or a church (religious paintings are relatively few though more numerous than is commonly supposed) for which they might work on the grand scale, painters set up a wall that the 'highest' art languished unappreciated. In fact, most of the histories hung at the Academy appear to have been sold; the more important were widely diffused by engrav-

ings and Benjamin West seems to have made a fortune out of painting them.

When West arrived in England in 1763 he settled down to paint portraits and 'Poussin size' histories, winning an almost immediate success which brought him to royal notice and patronage. These works were little more than exercises after Gavin Hamilton, whom he had met in Rome; but he created a furore in 1771, when it was still customary to represent the heroic in classical dress, by painting the *Death of Wolfe* (Pl. 308) in modern costumes, though in no whit relaxing his previous grand manner. The great popular success of this picture marked a turning point in history painting; from thenceforth classical subjects gave way to events from English history represented in the costume of their time. However, except for his abandonment of classical costume, West clung steadfastly to the established rules of the *genre* – notably by his formal composition, his reliance on poses derived from the Old Masters and his utter disregard for the known facts of the historical scene depicted. The next, and more important, step in the development of history painting was taken by J. S. Copley whose *Brooke Watson and the Shark* of 1778 broke every known rule in the cause of Truth. Copley followed up the success of this picture by painting the *Death of Major Pierson* (Pl. 31A), the *Death of Chatham* and the *Repulse of the Floating Batteries off Gibraltar*; all of which drew crowds when they were exhibited and enjoyed popularity as engravings.

Whereas West and Copley made a financial success of history painting, James Barry was less ready to conform to the desires of the time and was consequently a failure. His *chef d'œuvre*, the decoration of the lecture hall in the Royal Society of Arts is, however, the most considerable achievement of any British artist in the grand style in the century, and the scene which represents the culmination of the *Progress of Culture* (Pl. 30A) – the foundation of the Society – contains so great a concourse of the notabilities of the day that it may find a place even in a book devoted to the art of the English home. He is now remembered chiefly because of his influence on William Blake

who considered him the rival of Raphael and Michelangelo, in which judgment he would have concurred. Another history painter to influence Blake was the Swiss Fuseli, whose wildly romantic talent derived subjects from Shakespeare. As Professor of painting at the Royal Academy from 1799 to 1825, he exerted a strong influence on the young painters whose work will be considered in the next volume of this series. But Fuseli is here important as an illustrator of Shakespeare and was widely known by engravings after the vast canvases which he, together with several other artists, contributed to Alderman Boydell's ambitious scheme for a Shakespeare Gallery.

Rowlandson and Gillray

Prints after the most admired history pictures of the time must frequently have found their way into comparatively humble homes where they might be seen among their natural antitheses, the caricatures of Rowlandson, Gillray, the amateur Bunbury and a host of others. Thomas Rowlandson's rollicking rumbustious productions, which call to mind scenes from Smollett, are an effective antidote to any impression of overmastering sensibility in the conduct of life in this period. His drawing of the confused rabble visiting the Academy must be before any writer who deals with the high or the exquisite turns of eighteenth century taste. He was, however, a perceptive satirist by no means without delicacy of feeling and touch, as is shown by his watercolour landscapes. Less able as an artist, but more virulent as a satirist, James Gillray is a more important figure in the history of caricature. With the rival policies of Pitt and Fox, the French wars and the *amours* and eccentricities of the Prince Regent as targets, he had the perfect field for his abilities, and presented the political and social background of the period in its utmost squalor.

Sculpture

Although we may expect to find paintings or prints after paintings in all but the humblest homes during this period, original sculpture re-

mained the prerogative of the wealthy; and the middle-class family who might collect pictures in a small way would seldom encounter it outside the church. The wealthier institutions and the grander houses would usually contain a few marble chimney-pieces and, perhaps, a bust, but figures, groups and low reliefs were reserved for the galleries of the wealthy. Those who could not afford this expensive taste would have to content themselves with reproductions of original works in pottery, terra-cotta or artificial stone. It was the invention of Coade stone in 1769 which placed moulded sculpture within the reach of a wide public, and this substance, which was impervious to frost, quickly found its way into the houses and gardens of all the propertied classes. The Coade factory at Lambeth, which sent its wares to such distant places as Poland, Russia, the West Indies and North America, could provide anything from an Ionic capital (13s.) or a frieze of griffins (10s. a foot) to a bust of Queen Elizabeth (3 guineas), a 'Psyche fitted up with spring tubes for light' (5 guineas) or a 'River God 9 feet high with an Urn through which a stream of water may be carried' (100 guineas). Some of these works were designed by the first artists of the day, John Bacon, Flaxman and Banks among them, and brought sculpture into the homes which could not afford the marbles with which we are here primarily concerned. The Coade factory was also responsible for many of the capitals, friezes, low reliefs and even pediments which are such a notable feature of the urban architecture of the early nineteenth century.

Large sculptured marble chimney-pieces were going out of fashion at the beginning of this period and it is significant that one of the most notable, that carved between 1762 and 1764 at a cost of £325 for the gallery of Corsham Court, was by Scheemakers, an artist most of whose career belongs to the first half of the century. A more delicate style of interior decoration introduced by the Adam brothers demanded less pompous ornaments, and the groaning caryatids were replaced by trim frames lightly carved in low relief or prettily inlaid with scagliola. Although they were sometimes supplied by the leading practitioners,



The Sculptor

Rowlandson. inv.

Fig. 1. Nollekens carving a Venus, by Thomas Rowlandson.
British Museum.

such works can hardly be described as sculpture. Above the fireplace or elsewhere in the room a decorative feature was occasionally made of a low relief such as that carved by John Deare in 1788 (Pl. 31B).

Deare's relief stands mid-way between the decorative and what may be called history sculpture, reflecting the more absurd neo-classical tendencies of the period. It may be doubted, however, whether his contemporaries would have shared our delighted surprise on learning that these elegant Greeks were none other than our own King Edward I and Queen Eleanor. This exquisite relief is proof, if proof were needed, that neo-classicism was a stronger and more durable force in sculpture than in English painting.

Long before this period began sculptors were commissioned to copy the celebrated antique statues in Florence and Rome, and when they were asked to produce more original works they were expected to carve such figures as could barely be distinguished from the fragments ingeniously put together by the Roman dealers. The restriction was a hard one for an original genius, but a sculptor of ability, like Nollekens, could often obtain a good effect as in the group of *Castor and Pollux* (Pl. 21B) which he executed for Shugborough Hall in 1767. In low reliefs and small figures, moreover, Thomas Banks, the most notable history sculptor of the period, was able to draw a strong personal style out of the neo-classic mode. In his *Falling Titan* (Pl. 32A) he achieved an effect of such remarkable grandeur that anyone familiar with the photograph must be astonished to find that the marble itself measures no more than 33 inches in height. In *Thetis Dipping the Infant Achilles in the Styx* he was able to show a three-dimensional quality, rare indeed in English sculpture, and the flowing lines of the figure seek to leap out of the classical pattern, restrained only by the careful balance of the limbs.

Among men of taste the popularity of busts increased considerably during this period, no less for the depiction of the living than for the commemoration of the great dead. No 'gentleman's library' was complete without its poets and philosophers,

the natural genii of the place. Busts of Pope, Milton, Locke and Newton were produced throughout the period, nor were Homer and Plato forgotten. Wilton carved a bust of Alfred the Great for Lord Radnor (who presented it to University College, Oxford); Bacon began his career with a bust of Ossian and later carved those of Dean Collet for St Paul's School and Inigo Jones for the Carpenters' Hall. Busts of the contemporary great were frequently repeated by their carvers, and Nollekens sold 74 replicas of his bust of Pitt at £120 a piece. Furthermore, busts were often incorporated in church monuments, as every reader of Gray's *Elegy* knows.

Most of the notable sculptors of the period seem to have tried their hands at portraiture, one of the most successful being John Bacon who, according to Cowper,

Gives more than female heart to stone
And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.

But, as in the bust of George III (Pl. 32B), it was a precise imitation of draperies rather than animation of features which distinguished his work. In contrast, Joseph Nollekens, unquestionably the best portrait sculptor of the period, dispensed with or formalized the drapery, did away with the wig where possible and was consequently able to work unhampered in the neo-classic spirit. In portraits of ladies – the most notable is that of the Countess of Yarborough – he managed to perpetuate the beauty and freshness of his models, despite a tendency to make them so prettily sensitive that one expects them to blush at an unmannerly remark. His singularly penetrating busts of men – Laurence Sterne (Pl. 32C), Sir George Savile, Dr Johnson, Charles James Fox – are worthy to stand among all but the very best painted portraits of the period. Many other sculptors executed busts of excellent quality, like those of Pope Clement XIV and Gavin Hamilton (Pl. 32D) by Christopher Hewetson, but the majority of these have survived only in funerary monuments.

In this period church monuments grew larger and more numerous than ever before and one has the feeling that his way was indeed obscure whose memory was not graced with a tablet bearing at

least an urn. A legion of sculptors and stonemasons laboured to fill our gothic churches with an assemblage of classical figures representing not only the deceased but the Virtues, the Muses, and whoever else might be introduced to lament his death or support his tomb. Nor did sculptors find this work unprofitable – Nollekens charged £100 for the sketch of a monument and Bacon received no less than £6,000 for the memorial to Lord Chatham in Westminster Abbey. Indeed, to satisfy an enormous demand the sculptors were forced to employ an army of assistants and some of them never laid hand to chisel once their success had been established.

Monumental sculpture was at this time, dominated by neo-classicism which permitted such delightful incongruities as the figure of Admiral Holmes, in breast-plate and toga, resting his hand upon an unmistakably eighteenth-century cannon, or Sir John and Lady Salusbury who appear to have strayed out of Addison's *Cato* or some long forgotten classical tragedy. There was, nevertheless, a strain of naturalism which found its most notable expression in low reliefs of land and sea fights and flourished towards the end of the period when modern dress began to make its return. Large monuments gave sculptors the chance to include whole concourses of figures bewailing the subject, but when they worked on a smaller scale they usually had to content themselves with a limited stock of symbols: urns, extinguished torches, wreaths and, if all else failed, what John Bacon called 'our old friend the pelican'.

In the early years of the nineteenth century no sculptor was more versatile in providing monuments for a wide market than John Flaxman, whose work ranges from the gigantic Nelson memorial in St Paul's Cathedral to numerous little tablets in country churches. Although his classicism had been more thoroughly assimilated than that of any other sculptor of the time, he permitted himself to depart from the strictest rules when the occasion offered. His heroic figure of Nelson is by no means without a touch of naturalism in the head and his charming relief of Dr Warton and his scholars, in Winchester cath-

edral, is as fresh and vivid as it is unsentimental. Moreover, he was far better equipped to treat the nude than any previous English sculptor, as may be seen from his figure of Death on Lord Mansfield's monument in St Paul's; but his technique is more of low relief than sculpture in the round. It is significant that he is the only English sculptor to win a measure of European fame, albeit this was due more to his linear illustrations to Homer and Dante than to his carvings.

The beginning of the nineteenth century

This brief survey of late Georgian painting and sculpture comes to its close in 1810, when the future of the arts was regarded with much less hope than it had been fifty years before. For more than a decade, Europe had been closed to the student and the collector, though the needs of the latter were amply supplied (as a result of the Revolutionary wars) by a greater importation of old master paintings than ever before. Martin Archer Shee complained that the country was 'glutted with pictures from the best that genius can boast to the worst that fraud can manufacture; until all the wealth of individuals disposable for objects of virtue has been diverted into channels from which our native arts can derive no benefit'. For lack of patronage alone, he argued, English art was sinking into a decline; yet it was from no want of employment that Flaxman and Lawrence were rising to occupy the places of leading sculptor and portrait painter; and, on the other hand, it was from no spectacular acts of munificence that Constable and Turner were to become our greatest landscape painters. As the attitude to art, to nature, to life, was changed by the French revolution and the subsequent wars, so new artists rose to reflect new tastes. Sensibility gave way to subjective romanticism: the real landscape took the place of the imaginative or improved; and in painting, no less than in poetry, the visionary was making his appearance.

Although he belongs to the nineteenth century, William Blake, who styled himself a visionary, had deep roots in the previous era. The contemporary artists who most influenced him were Fuseli, Flaxman and Barry, who derived much of

their inspiration from Italy. He was one of the first to dispute the authority of Reynolds' academic precepts as laid down in the *Discourses*, but was none the less inspired to borrow postures from Scamozzi and Michelangelo. His poetry, no less than his painting, showed him to be the fiercest of spirits, and yet he illustrated Blair's *The Grave*, a poem redolent with the distant sensibility of the earlier eighteenth century. Furthermore, in his study of medieval sculpture and manuscript illumination he showed himself to be a child of the Gothic Revival. His illustration of the tomb in Blair's *The Grave* (fig. 2) shows at

once how much he was of the eighteenth century and yet how far he looked beyond it.

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The *Dictionary of British Sculptors* by Rupert Gunnis (1953), the fullest and best account of sculpture in the period, is well supplied with bibliographies for the individual sculptors.



Fig. 2 The Counsellor, King, Warrior, Mother and Child in the Tomb, from Blair's *The Grave*, illustrated by William Blake. British Museum

Silver and Plate

Silver and Plate

GERALD TAYLOR

Changes in style evolve slowly and to a great extent almost imperceptibly so that no sudden transformation in the forms of plate can be expected to coincide with the accession of George III in 1760 or with the year 1811 when the Prince of Wales became Prince Regent. It will, however, be shown that during the intervening half-century the Rococo style was outmoded by the Adam style (a discussion of the characteristics of which forms the chief part of the following contribution) and that the latter in its turn gave place to what is now known as the Regency style. The transition from Rococo to Adam, naturally later in plate than in architecture, began about 1765, and was, with few exceptions, completed before 1775. The emergence of the Regency style from that of Adam, perhaps more correctly described as an evolution, during the last quarter of the century, was accomplished by 1810. It must be understood that these generalizations apply only to the metropolitan silversmiths and do not relate to the work of provincial or American craftsmen.

As in its development the light Rococo style accumulated supplementary ornaments of naturalistic flowers (Pl. 33A), classical figures, or exotic *chinoiserie*s, so the succeeding Adam style, likewise essentially light, assimilated Gothic, Chinese, Egyptian and emblematic motifs taken from nature, as well as more elaborate and massively conceived forms and ornaments selected from equally diverse and remote sources. An analogy may be made with the development, though it continued over a much longer period of time, of

imperial Roman architecture from the purer styles preceding it.

The decline of so contrived and sophisticated a style as the Rococo was protracted by the adoption of foreign and quite unrelated motifs. With increasing momentum the inevitable reaction of 'taste' against the Rococo coincided with the introduction of a quite incompatible vocabulary of motifs, — neo-classical, positive, rational — which conformed with the underlying tradition of classical idealism that since the Renaissance had never been entirely submerged. The introduction of neo-classical motifs and forms into the silversmiths' repertoire can be noted in the capitals of western Europe shortly after the accession of George III and about ten years before Louis XVI came to the throne in France, where he gave his name to the new style. The designs of plate became strictly symmetrical, their proportions based on those of architecture, and their ornaments impersonal, regular, and stylized to a high degree.

The approach to and independent studies of classical remains by many intelligent and some brilliant men of the period, such as Winckelmann, Adam and Piranesi, were perhaps more informed and penetrating than those of their predecessors in the late fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. Nevertheless even the best-informed contemporary students made some attributions of artifacts to centuries and civilizations, which might seem arbitrary to our eyes. The practical application to plate of their findings, however, at a time when a greater number of educated persons were more familiar with classical history, ideas and

imagery, than ever before or even today, met with widespread understanding and approbation. The beginnings of analytical study of classical ornament at this period had produced a clearer conception of its principles and effected a wider application of its details to the arts.

Thence it was often possible for the designers of plate to apply much authentic ornament to vessels whose proportions were based on what were then accepted as the correct classical forms. Their task required more imagination than, for example, that of architects, not only because the principal hoards of classical plate had yet to be discovered, but also because nearly all of the classical artifacts illustrated in published works had been made for ceremonies and uses no longer current, and the forms of which were not readily adaptable to the requirements of the eighteenth century. Indeed 'Adam' plate was rather inspired by, if not deduced from, the better-known remains of architecture, sculpture and vessels of bronze or pottery only.

The introduction of the Adam style, its swift ascendancy and dominance for two decades, were followed by a gradual process of development and transformation culminating in the Regency style. Predominantly Graeco-Roman, it also included Gothic, Rococo and Egyptian terms so that by the beginning of the Regency period it may be said that no coherent and distinguishable style existed for plate, but rather an eclectic combination of forms and motifs suitable for each and any particular purpose.

At this time, British plate was being exported abroad and began to influence the wares of Scandinavia and the Iberian Peninsula. Considerable quantities were also shipped to the United States of America, whose independence, acknowledged in 1782, coincided with westward expansion and whose rich resources heralded the future of a flourishing silver industry which had roots in the British elements of Boston and Philadelphia, and among the Dutch immigrant craftsmen in New York. Moreover, by the Treaty of Commerce in 1786, imports of English silverware were again permitted into France and, finally, at

the Revolution the work of the Parisian goldsmith whose standard of quality hitherto had commanded of the world's market – in which weight of metal, excellence of workmanship and well-proportioned designs were considered of greater importance than price – gave way to the productions of London.

In widespread ways commercial and industrial progress follows the fortunes of peace and war and both have direct repercussions on the craft of the silversmith. At the time in question, moreover, there were men of strong character and inventive mind who had no small influence on the developing industry; for the manufacture of plate, as of so many other products, was indeed becoming industrialized. Instead of being hammered, sheets of metal could be rolled from the ingot; stamping and piercing operations could be quickly performed by machinery and without the aid of skilled craftsmen.

Among the more enterprising figures in the rising industry was Matthew Boulton¹ (1728–1809), whose business relations with Watt, Adam and Wedgwood kept him in the forefront of industrial pioneering in many fields almost throughout the reign. He began to produce in mass roughly-finished component parts of plate to be sold for assembly by independent workers. Engineering and metallurgical advances not only improved production machinery but led to new fields for expansion. Bronze- or copper-gilt had been common in earlier centuries, and ormolu was in wide current use; but at this date a method of fusing a copper ingot between two thick silver plates and rolling out the whole into a thin composite sandwich, enabled objects to be made of this cheaper and lighter substitute which to all intents and purposes had the appearance of solid silver. Invented in Sheffield and first applied to the making of buttons about 1743, the idea was gradually applied to larger objects and finally industrialized on a large scale by the partners Boulton and Fothergill in Birmingham. Sheffield Plate, the name by which it came to be, and is still

¹ H. W. Dickinson, *Matthew Boulton*, 1937, pp. 51–3 and *passim*.

known, was made in increasing quantities by a number of other firms until the middle of the succeeding century.³

The rise of the factory presented a threat to the livelihood of small workers who followed traditional methods of production. Many of them were induced to specialize in a particular type of work, especially flat ware and candlesticks, while others, unable to hold their own, became employees of large concerns. The cleavage between the plate-worker and the retailing goldsmith grew wider. The large and prosperous firm was enabled to attract and employ the more outstanding designers and craftsmen and the fact, for example, that there is reason to believe Matthew Boulton had an interest in schools for designers in Birmingham is significant.

The growing threat of the Birmingham and Sheffield factories to the established quasi-monopoly of the London goldsmiths (as well as to the older provincial centres of the craft), as represented by Boulton's activities, was more than met by the rapid rise to prominence of Paul Storr (freeman 1792; d. 1834) and by the immense size of the Rundell-Bridge-Storr-Mortimer-Hunt and Roskell concern – which is reputed to have employed 1,500 hands at one time – as well as by the considerable productions of other large firms, the Batemans, the Hennells, or the Parker-Wakelin-Taylor-Garrard succession. London was never in danger of losing its lead either in the weight of plate produced, or, more importantly, in the quality of its design and execution.

Boulton's persistent efforts for the establishment of assay offices at Birmingham and Sheffield – the latter ironically was given as its mark a crown which Boulton has used on his own earlier plate and Sheffield Plate – were however justified by the distances of other provincial offices, notably of York, Chester (where Boulton used to take his wares), or Newcastle from the growing centres of production. At Exeter the craft had dwindled from the middle of the century. The evidence of

the assay-masters of these last four offices before a commission of 1773 shows a slackness in administration, which was as much due to lack of supervision from the Lord Chancellor's office and the Royal Mint as to the inadequacy of their own small establishments. Edinburgh remained the principal Scottish office although the importance of Glasgow increased considerably. In Dublin the craft flourished, as may be judged from the fact that 136 goldsmiths registered their names, if not all their marks, in compliance with the statute of 1783.

To satisfy the demands of the growing middle classes, goods of inferior weight and simple ornament, in silver, Sheffield plate⁴ and Britannia metal⁵ were produced in quantity, and throughout the reign the production of plate and with it of course, the number of plate-workers increased immensely. Nevertheless it was naturally the ruling class with its international connections which continued to order the largest quantities of the finest plate and in the newest fashion. The King himself patronized Thomas Heming (cf. Pl. 33A) but his preference for the quietness of domestic life reduced requirements for formal State plate to little or none.⁶ Indeed, almost the only purchase of any consequence made by George III was of a set of French plate, by Henri Auguste. His heir, on the other hand, played a very active and even over-liberal role in setting the fashion in plate as he did in so many other aspects of fashionable life. It was a curiously prophetic circumstance that the Prince of Wales was offered the Freedom of the Goldsmiths' Company when only a boy of nine, but it was not until a separate establishment was set up for him in Carlton House, at the age of 18, in 1781, that he provided confirmation of his extravagant leanings. Perhaps the first piece of plate he acquired personally was the cup by

³ The most comprehensive work on the subject is F. Bradbury's *History of Old Sheffield Plate*, 1912.

⁴ See G. B. Hughes, *Country Life*, CXIV (30 August 1955), p. 562.

⁵ E. A. Jones, *The Gold and Silver of Windsor Castle*, 1911, *passim*. See also *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Royal Plate*, held in the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1954, and the *Small Picture Book* of the same title (No. 37), which illustrates it.

⁶ Paul Storr's Galvanic Goblet (1814) heralded the electro-plating industry, developed especially by Messrs. Elkington. See C. C. Oman, and N. M. Penser, *Country Life*, CXV (4 March 1954), p. 606.

R. Salmon presented to him on his attaining his majority. Just after the turn of the century, three important royal services were ordered, the Jamaica, the Egyptian and the Grand. The first was commissioned by the Jamaica Assembly from Rundell's, and made by Digby Scott and Benjamin Smith in 1803-4 to be presented to the Duke of Clarence (later William IV); the service included four soup-tureens, eight sauce-tureens and six ice-pails, all decorated with panels of naval and military trophies. The Egyptian Service was assembled in the same years, but was the product of three workshops. It includes four soup-tureens by Paul Storr, eight salts and twelve sauce-boats by Scott and Smith, in which much of the ornament was derived from ancient Egypt, though intermingled with it were the prevalent Graeco-Roman motifs.

The assembling of the Grand Service, begun by the Prince of Wales in 1805, and continued for a quarter of a century until his death, was in keeping with the practice of most of the sovereigns of Europe, particularly of Denmark and Portugal, who at this period were amassing magnificent plate.

Commissions from wealthy private individuals and from institutions were on an extensive and almost as lavish a scale. A few examples, all of them manufactured by Paul Storr, will suffice to illustrate the fact: the gold font made (1797-8) for the christening of the eldest son of the fourth Duke of Portland; Lord Desborough's dinner service of eighty-two pieces (1797-8); and 125 plates for the Goldsmiths' Company (1808-11). Perhaps the most interesting and important group of commissions is that of plate for presentation to the heroes of the day, the victorious admirals and generals whose successes in battle came as such relief to the overwhelming campaigns conducted by Napoleon. Lloyd's, with their especial concern with war at sea, made presentations after Howe's victory of 1794 and again from their Patriotic Fund after the Battle of Trafalgar (1805) to some of the senior officers engaged. One of these vases (Pl. 35), made by Scott and Smith to the design of John Flaxman, ingeniously combines classical motifs with contemporary emblems: acanthus leaves round the surbase alternate with acorns rep-

resenting the ships of English oak; 'Britannia triumphant' is seated holding a figure of Victory in her right hand; on the pedestal, formed by the cover, stands a finely modelled lion, between two volute handles, in which the paterae have been replaced by Tudor roses, and round which are applied rope-mouldings. An equally eclectic approach is seen in a parcel-gilt sauce-tureen of the Deccan Service in the Wellington Museum at Apaley House * (Pl. 37a) presented to Sir Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington) by the officers of the Army of the Deccan. Ornamented with a band of interlacing laurel wreaths and with two realistic intertwined serpents for each handle, the bowl is raised up on four elephants, placed back to back on a circular base, which is also ornamented with a band of laurel in low relief; on the broad rayed pedestal sits an oriental figure beneath an umbrella. In spite of the introduction and realistic rendering of these exotic motifs, this set of tureens of 1806 retains a predominantly classical feeling. By contrast, however, a more romantic impression is produced by a parcel-gilt candelabrum in the same museum. At each corner of the heavy triangular plinth the concave sides of which are ornamented with battle scenes in low relief, sits a soldier in contemplative attitude; above them on a fluted tambour four other soldiers, also in contemporary uniform, stand reaching up to support a fasces, from which spring six curved leafy branches, each bearing a socket at its tip. In spite of its height of 31 inches, it lacks the monumental quality that is evident in the centre-piece commissioned from Paul Storr (Pl. 40) and presented to Wellesley a few years later by the field officers of the Army of Portugal; only a little taller, it is by contrast a restrained and monumental work. A massive but graceful two-handled vessel of low proportions, surmounted by a finial figure of Victory posed on a globe, is set on a large square plinth magnificently engraved, at the corners of which are piled muskets and flags; the remainder of the ornament is restricted to the neo-classical repertoire and is therefore without

* Victoria and Albert Museum, *Small Picture Book*, No. 33, *Regency Domestic Silver*.

special associations; it includes gadrooning, laurel leaves, both conventionally wreathed and more naturally rendered, lanceolate and acanthus leaves, and fleshy vine-tendrils for the handles.

Although the Duke of Wellington was not appointed Ambassador to the French Court until 1814, his issue of plate contained much of an earlier date; this he retained as a perquisite, as had other ambassadors, though he was one of the last to be allowed to do so. Among it is a gilt sugar-vase of 1810-11 by Benjamin and James Smith (Pl. 39) which closely resembles a set of eight of 1809-10 in the Royal Collection, and four others made five years earlier by Scott and Smith for Earl Howe. In their ornament it seems that Tatham's strictures (see below, p. 74) had already been heeded, or even anticipated, inasmuch as the luxurious profusion of Imperial Roman ornament is there represented to the full on a domestic vessel, no more than eight inches in height, the design of which would lose little of its monumentality if cut in stone many times as high. From the same issue and from the same year, but by Paul Storr to the order of Rundell's, is a centre-piece which serves as a fruit-bowl, one of a number of similar vessels, set in a circular basket supported by three caryatids, each standing on the arm of a triangular base raised on satyrs' masks with swags of fruit between. Here no extrinsic motif had to be introduced to dispel the purely classical impression imparted by the tripod form and the three caryatids, each with her two thyrsi crossed in saltire with those of her neighbours.

If William Kent (1684-1748) had shown the advantages of designing a house and its interior furnishings as a single entity, Robert Adam believed that an architect should be responsible for every detail, and accordingly produced designs for all kinds of furniture, among them articles of plate.⁷ When in Rome in 1756, Adam found Allan Ramsay, a former acquaintance, who had just published his *Dialogues on Taste* in friendly rebuttal of Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (1753).

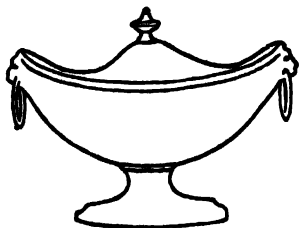
Whereas the empirical and pugnacious Hogarth intended 'to fix the fluctuating ideas of taste', his book was rather in the nature of a belated apology of the Baroque and Rococo styles (indeed, the candlesticks he illustrated were those in fashion when he was still apprenticed as an engraver on silver) with continuous belittlements of classical art. Ramsay, on the other hand, spoke out for Gothic, and being drawn into the Graeco-Roman controversy, next preferred Greek to Roman. In spite both of occasional studies of Gothic remains (similar to, but less advanced than those of classical remains) and of some enthusiasts who built in imitation of the Gothic style, its motifs were much more widely used in furniture than in plate – even in church plate until A. W. N. Pugin's advocacy coincided with the rise of the Tractarians. Indeed it was only in repetitive pierced work that pointed or cusped tracery or quatrefoils were used, particularly on the sides of salt-cellsars and sugar-bowls, and even then perhaps derivatively from the pierced galleries on tables of the Chippendale gothic vogue.

Objects from ancient Egypt had no English protagonist, though many were illustrated in de Caylus' *Recueil*. Opportunities were given for the use of Egyptian motifs in English plate when presentations were required for the victors in the Egyptian battles.⁸ Thereafter Egyptian motifs were sometimes mingled with others of classical origin, though they were never popular.

From further East, naturalistic motifs were derived from the Indian scene (see above, Pl. 37a) and elsewhere, but with regard neither for their local significance nor indeed for the styles of indigenous art. *Chinoiserie* retained for a short time their old allure, appropriately on tea-caddies (Pl. 36a), tea-urns, tea-pots and epergnes until the discontinuance of the Rococo style. But for a short time Chinese symbols, scarcely studied and little understood, like the rest of Eastern art, were sometimes engraved on tea-caddies during the transition from the Rococo to the Adam style (Pl. 36a).

⁷ Some of his designs are preserved in Sir John Soane's Museum, see Pl. 34.

⁸ E.g. the Battle of the Nile Cup, in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich; repr. N. M. Penzer, *Paul Storr*, 1954, p. 106, Pl. XIV.



c. 1790



c. 1800

Fig. 1. Tureens.



Fig. 2. Candlestick of a type common 1775-90.

Classical antiquities had never been without their devotees and students—even in the most anti-classical style of all, Rococo, some classical motifs were introduced. In addition to the predominantly classical basis of University studies, the illustrated publications of Winckelmann, Piranesi, Stuart and Revett, de Caylus, Adam and others during the latter half of the eighteenth century⁹ prepared the way for its revival. In a narrower circle, the *Discourses* of the first President of the Royal Academy, and the writings of Fuseli, its Professor of Painting, helped to instil in students of design a high regard for the finest works of antiquity. It is significant that the best known designers of plate, John Flaxman (1755-1827), his intimate friend Thomas Stothard (1755-1844), Charles Catton (1756-1819) (until his emigration to the United States in 1806) and others should have studied there. Moreover, Flaxman, like the Adam brothers, spent several years in Italy, and, after working for Josiah Wedgwood, undertook designs for plate and attracted the attention of Philip Rundell and his partners. The neo-classical style was indeed deliberately fostered as a matter of business by a nucleus of influential employers, including Adam, Boulton, Wedgwood and Rundell. In particular, the perceptive and enterprising Boulton realized that even if his own education was deficient, taste played an important part in the lives of those with money, and he therefore set himself to ensure that it was evident in his plate, Sheffield plate, ormolu, cut-steel jewellery, and other fine products.

Another theorist, the architect Charles Heathcot Tatham (1772-1842), published the first book of English designs specially for plate¹⁰ as opposed to those intended for more general purposes—in which he complained that 'instead of Massiveness, the principal characteristic of good Plate, light and insignificant forms have prevailed, to the utter exclusion of all good ornament whatever'. It is true that much plate of the later

⁹ Their works are briefly discussed and their contemporary influence assessed by J. Lees-Milne, *The Age of Adam*, 1947, pp. 42-56.

¹⁰ *Designs for Ornamental Plate*, 1806.

Hanoverian period was intended to appear light, and was indeed often very light in weight for its size, but it was by no means devoid of good ornament. Nevertheless as a champion of Roman architecture, Tatham's arguments may have helped to direct designers towards the Regency style.

More recently, J. Hambridge and L. D. Caskey¹¹ have convincingly demonstrated that Greek potters designed and made their wares, as the architects their public buildings, accurately in accordance with two systems of proportion which are capable of infinite variation and yet are easily delineated with the aid of dividers and a ruler. Geometrical proportions were much the more frequently employed, arithmetical proportions scarcely at all. One of the former recurs very frequently, namely that of the golden, or divine, section; it was revived during the Renaissance and used, to cite but one example, in a silver-gilt cup (belonging to Dr C. H. Josten) made in Nuremberg in the later sixteenth century. It is not surprising therefore that it was again applied to plate, as well as ceramics, during the neo-classical revival and an illustration is provided by Boileau's design of 1800 for the Doncaster Race Cup.¹² Nevertheless, these isolated examples are given here to emphasize the completeness of the return to ancient inspiration and should not be considered to reflect anything like a universal attention to these principles of design.

Much greater evidence is available about the ornament of neo-classical plate. Much of its permanent value and a strong reason for its repeated use and revival lie in the fact that for the most part the motifs represented, though in a style or on an object that can be meticulously dated, are themselves natural, and therefore timeless and impersonal.

The wide range of classical motifs were ultimately derived from vegetable, animal, geometrical and artificial forms. In the first and largest group are included the acanthus leaf and the lanceolate leaf, usually placed side by side as a calyx or surbase; the bay or laurel leaf, both braided as a

garland and in a continuous band; the leaf as a sheath at the springing of handles or applied to them; vine leaves and tendrils and bunches of grapes; anthemion, honeysuckle, lotus, or palmette; the oak leaf and acorn, as a finial; and the husk, usually graduated, in swags or pendent; heads of rams, satyrs (Pl. 38), lions, etc.; skulls of oxen, small infants, often incorporated in rinceaux, and other human figures in low or full relief in imitation of antique sculpture, though often in contemporary attire. In the second group the fret (key-pattern or meander) appears in great variety, as well as fluting (spiral, or straight, deep or shallow, tapering or regular), gadrooning, guilloche, and beading (paralleled by the half-pearl borders of watches, brooches, rings, etc.). In the last group medallions, containing imitations of antique busts or figures, oval and circular paterae, festoons of drapery, and ribbons, and the wave-pattern.

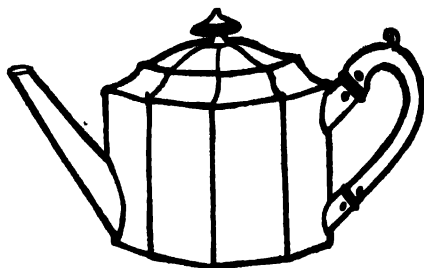
These ornaments were carried out in all the techniques available to the goldsmith. Gilding or parcel-gilding of important pieces was frequent (Pl. 37b, 40); solid gold was rarely used. Enamelling was much used on watch-cases and other jewellery. The weight of metal employed, like the quality of workmanship, varies from the lavish and magnificent to the mean and skimpy. Boulton once wrote to Fothergill, 'How can I expect the public to countenance rubbish from Soho, while they can secure sound and perfect work from any other quarter?' There are many large castings of finely modelled and finished figures; the standard of chasing and embossing had never been surpassed in London. Where the commission demanded, nothing was spared to produce the desired effect.

Better known by name and far more numerous than the designers or writers are the goldsmiths themselves who effected their ideas. The life and works of the greatest maker, the last great silversmith, Paul Storr, are the subject of a monograph.¹³ He was apprenticed to the Swedish immigrant Andrew Fogelberg, whose London work dates from 1770 and is notable for applied silver

¹¹ L. D. Caskey, *Geometry of Greek Vases*, 1922.

¹² Victoria and Albert Museum, *Small Picture Book*, No. 35, *Adam Silver*, Pl. 30.

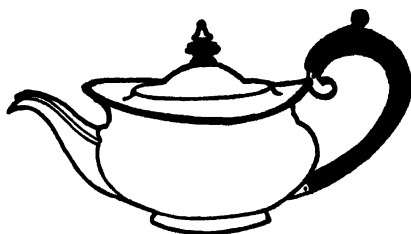
¹³ N. M. Penzer, *Paul Storr, the last of the Goldsmiths*, 1954.



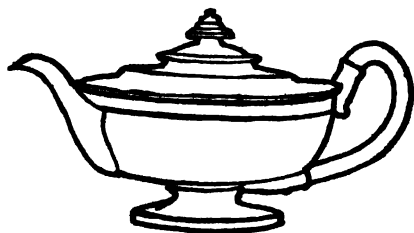
c. 1790



c. 1800



c. 1810



c. 1810

Fig. 3. Teapots of the period.

cameos, an idea perhaps derived from his neighbour James Tassie (1735–99), though it was not unknown in Tudor, early Stuart and Huguenot plate. When Storr obtained his freedom in 1792 his work resembled his master's, just as de Lamerie's had resembled that of Harache, but in the next five years during his Piccadilly partnership with Frisbee and perhaps through Tassie's introductions, he had established a reputation for himself as a craftsman of outstanding talent. The mastery displayed in the Portland font (see above, p. 72) was maintained in all his later work (Pl. 40). After that of Paul Storr, perhaps the reputation of Hester Bateman (cf. Pl. 37A) is next in public estimation. Yet there were many other equally original and distinguished individuals and many firms more productive of fine plate than that conducted by the Batemans between 1774 and 1840. Thomas Heming (cf. Pl. 33A) was given the Royal warrant and was responsible for much excellent plate in the Rococo and French Louis XV styles, and latterly in the neo-classical style. In this appointment his successors were the partners Rundell, Bridge and Rundell, with whom Storr was the principal plate worker; they not only had their individual and joint marks but engraved their names followed by *AVRIFICES REGIS ET PRINCIPIS WALLIAE LONDINI FECERUNT*. Other firms who put out work were Portal and Gearing, and later Green and Ward, both of Ludgate Hill.

Parallel, but not necessarily connected, developments were affecting not only the processes of manufacture and sale of plate, but also the vessels for which it was used. As some social practices were discontinued and others were introduced, so the manufacture of plate for the former purposes gradually ceased and the development of new forms for the latter was begun. A noticeable result of the search for homogeneous domestic interiors is the development of matching services, tea-services, dinner-services of considerable size with matching plates and dishes, matching tureens for soup and sauce, and huge sets of matching cutlery. An extreme example is the magnificent Howe double breakfast service of 1812–13 by Storr, of 16 pieces, weighing together nearly 800 ounces.



(a) THOMAS HUNTER. Chalice, 1763. In W. Wilson Hunt.



(b) WILLIAM FLANNERY. Basket, 1763. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Queen, Storm and Ruins design, by Robert Adam, The Richmond Cup, silver, 1779.
Height 15 in. Diameter of footed.



Henry Scott and Benjamin Smith, designed by John Flaxman. The Teutinger Vase, 1807.
Height 27 in. Vase and Albert Meunier.



(a) ANONYMOUS LA SALLE, FRANCE, 1791. Height 5½ in. Antiques Museum.



(b) RICHARD CARTER, THOMAS SMITH and ROBERT SMITH, ENGLAND, 1791. Height 5 in. Antiques Museum.



(a) Herman Barrow. Teapot, 1785. Height 5½ in. Yale Art of America Collection.



(a) James Kneass. Salt-cellar, paracelphs, 1806. Height 5 in. Wallington Mount.



JAMES ARMINSON. Silver-plated, 1775. Height 3½ in. Firenze and Milan Museum.



Burgess and James Saxe. Gift urn, silver. Height 8 in. Williamstown.



Pure silver. Silver-gilt exterior, etc. Height 33 in. Wallace Mount

Other innovations were 'argyles' (small vessels with lid and spout for serving gravy), goblets, stirrup-cups, honey-pots, tea-urns, toasted-cheese dishes, toast-racks, egg-cups and stands, and cruet stands with glass bottles for several kinds of sauce in addition to wine and vinegar. Some vessels like the 'argyle' were experimental; others, like the tea-urn, stirrup-cup and toasted-cheese dish were in vogue for a comparatively short time; but most of them had come to stay.

Without reference to ecclesiastical and municipal plate, the variety of uses for which silver was found suitable at this time is very large when compared with any other material; tea-cups and saucers were exclusively made of ceramics which rivalled the previous metals or their baser substitutes for many other uses; glass was unchallenged in the service of wine; on decanters and sauce-bottles, silver played a subsidiary part in their embellishment but a superior role in salt-cellar, mustard-pots, sugar-pails and cream pails. Wood was a useful ancillary, as were ivory and cane, for handles of tea- and coffee-pots, or the base of coasters. A list of the principal items made of silver, entirely or partly, is set out at this point.

Tankards, mugs, goblets, stirrup-cups; punch-bowls and ladles; wine-coolers, ice-pails; wine-funnels; wine-labels; wine-coasters (decanter stands); epergnes; centre-pieces; baskets; toast-racks; soup-tureens, mazarine-dishes (fitted with a strainer, for fish, etc.), entrée-dishes; supper-dishes; toasted-cheese dishes; serving dishes, and covers, of various sizes; plates for soup, meat and other courses; sauce-tureens and sauce-boats; 'argyles'; dish-crosses; dish-rings; cruet-frames and fittings; sugar-casters; salt-cellar; pepper-casters or pots; mustard-pots; salt- and mustard-spoons; knives, forks and spoons; ladles for soup and gravy; fish-slices and trowels; asparagus-servers; grape-scissors; skewers; marrow-scoops; candlesticks; candelabra; chamber-sticks; taper-sticks; trays; tea-pots; tea-caddies and caddy-spoons; tea-urns; coffee-pots; milk-jugs; hot-water jugs with or without lamps; basins, baskets and bowls for sugar; sugar-nippers and tongs; tea-spoons; inkstands; waiters (salvers); hand-bells;

pap-boats; and a variety of indeterminate small wares which come near to being jewellery, such as snuff-boxes, mounts of walking-sticks, watch-cases and chatelaines.

The complex Rococo forms, with their irregular and asymmetrical shapes (Pl. 33A, a) gave place to simpler ones based on the circle, oval, square, hexagon and octagon. In their purest forms, they were found to provide suitable outlines for trays and salvers.

For some of the objects listed above it was possible to use the shape most characteristic of the period, notably for race-cups, large and small ornamental vases, tea-urns, jugs, hot-water jugs, pepper-casters and even 'argyles' (see Pl. 34).

A second shape with close affinities, suitable for vases, urns and tea-pots, offers an instructive comparison between plate and ceramics. In the Victoria and Albert Museum are a silver-gilt vase of 1775 by John Arnell (Pl. 38) and a vase of black basaltes ware, marked 'Wedgwood'¹⁴ and made about a decade later. They differ a little in ornament and proportion (the cover of the latter is less exactly a hemisphere), yet the oviform shape, the handles, the striped effect and the swags of drapery offer striking parallels. Of about 1775 – and thus corresponding in date with the silver vase – is another marked 'Wedgwood and Bentley' of agate-ware, which has the same form of handles, though it is less remarkably similar in other respects.

For soup and sauce-tureens the former vase was compressed in both elevation and plan; the resulting form (Pl. 36a) was more pleasing when the urn was swept upwards towards each loop-handle (Fig. 1), one of many forms adapted for the salt-cellar.

For many vessels simple geometrical forms were introduced, the pure cube for tea-caddies (Pl. 36A), and the cylinder, less often round (for 'argyles') than oval (for tea-pots, tea-caddies and salts) (Pl. 37A). Although these basic shapes assumed varied accretions of superficial ornament and necessary components, such as handles, finials and spouts, during the next two decades, they

¹⁴ W. B. Honey, *Wedgwood Ware*, 1948, Pl. 57, and also for the second comparison Pl. B.

themselves underwent more fundamental modifications by variation of their proportions and elaboration of their forms. Thus, an examination of this fundamental trend in relation to the tea-pot reveals that not only are there numerous variations in the oval plan, but also many elaborations of the superstructure with low domes and mouldings (Pl. 37A), of the sides and spout with curves, so that by the early years of the nineteenth century the only horizontal line left is often that around the base. The tureen, and with it the related forms of salt-cellar, was likewise the subject of many variations until the basic shape of both tureen and tea-pot became almost identical, that is to say of a complex bombé form on a rounded oblong plan. Efforts to design a matching tea-service perhaps influenced this trend strongly, in that the conflicting shapes of tea-pot, sugar-bowl and milk-jug found at the accession of George III were resolved by using the shape of the sugar-bowl as the master design, with its two like handles at opposite sides or at each end; on the milk jug, which was of a different size, one handle was replaced by an everted lip; on the tea-pot, the handle was suitably modified to afford insulation, while an opposed curving spout was added, usually tapering and of a compressed section; the shape of the coffee-pot was achieved either by erecting a tall concave neck on a body matching that of the tea-pot or by placing on a foot, or feet, a heightened body of similar form with handle and spout suitably heightened. However attractive these simplifications may appear, the diversity of designs made during this period, even within the limits of these four vessels, was such that a reference to the numerous exceptions will result in pointless confusions.

To other objects a variety of shapes derived more or less faithfully from antique remains were found suitable. One of the more straightforward adaptations, quite in harmony with the spirit of the neo-classical revival, was the stirrup-cup in the shape of a fox's head. The forms of the calyx-

krater and volute-krater lent themselves with scarcely any alteration for wine coolers or presentation pieces respectively. Even small antique oil-lamps were copied from ceramic or bronze prototypes, perhaps more in a spirit of antiquarianism than for actual use.

From classical candelabra and altars, in stone and metal, were derived many tripod motifs. Classical architecture provided suitable designs for some objects, notably the candlestick to which Corinthian and composite columns were easily adapted. A term (inverted obelisk) surmounted by an urn for the socket was no less successfully and widely used (Fig. 2). The deep helmet-shaped jug, the four-legged salt-cellar or sugar-bowl, and tripod jugs bear further witness to the pervasive influence of ancient forms.

On the other hand it must be mentioned that many recent and traditional forms were retained for plate in constant domestic use, notably for sauce-boats, castors, salt-cellar or tankards.

The 'Hanoverian' form of spoons and forks gave way to the 'Old English' by a reversal of the curve on the tail of the handle and a lightening of the structure due to the use of machinery. The edges of the handles were often beaded, threaded or 'feathered', and their upper side ornamented with bright-cut engraving, the most typical decorative technique of the time. It was by no means confined to flat-ware, but is seldom found in conjunction with any other ornament except piercing. Its shallow curving facets enliven the patterns with sparkling reflections, in a manner impossible with the deep channels cut into the metal according to the traditional technique, still then used for lettering, coats of arms, and crests.

During the later years of the period form and ornament reveal other characteristics which foreshadow the full flowering of the Regency period, as well as combinations of Romanticism, further flung eclecticism and other influences that are not generally obvious until the nineteenth century was well advanced.



Pottery and Porcelain

Pottery and Porcelain

PATRICK SYNGE-HUTCHINSON

The decade immediately following the first half of the eighteenth century may be regarded as a period at which the ceramic craft of England, having emerged from the pre-porcelain era, was about to establish itself on a basis that would enable it to play no small part in the movement which, during the next 50 years, was to effect the gradual transformation of this country from a rural into an industrial community.

The setting up of factories making soft-paste porcelain at Bow and Chelsea, from about 1745 onwards, was soon followed by undertakings at Bristol, Worcester, Derby, Longton Hall, Liverpool and Lowestoft, all of which, unlike their principal rivals at Meissen and Sévres, relied on private enterprise rather than Royal patronage for their establishment.

In Staffordshire the coming of the china factories had imparted a fresh impetus to the making of earthenware figures and other wares, for, whereas the earlier potters had created a style whose charm lay in its native character and lack of sophistication, a new movement was now beginning which, gaining in scope and strength, was to bring Staffordshire, through the innovations of Josiah Wedgwood, an international market that has survived to the present day. It does not of course follow that the productions of the second half of the century were in an aesthetic sense superior to those of the first. In many respects quite the reverse is true. Names like those of Wedgwood, Thomas Whieldon, and the Wood family of Burslem, Ralph senior, his brother Aaron and their sons Ralph junior and Enoch,

are associated with the highest standards of craftsmanship, but it must be remembered that all these, with the exception of the two younger Woods, were born and reared in the traditions of the earlier potters. Wedgwood alone was responsible for the great changes that were soon to take place.

The population of England and Wales was rising, due largely, as G. M. Trevelyan points out in his *English Social History*, to 'The Act of 1751' which placed a high tax on spirits and forbade their sale by distillers and shopkeepers. Not only did this do much to counteract the terrible ravages caused by the drinking of cheap gin, but also helped to popularize tea as a national beverage, which, after the middle years of the century, became a formidable rival to alcohol with all classes both in town and country. Porcelain was a costly material to produce and no doubt the potters of Staffordshire and elsewhere found an increasing demand for tea equipages which were within the means of the less well-to-do. Figures too, both human and animal, had greatly increased in popularity, principally as a result of importations from the Continent, especially Meissen, and imitations made by the English porcelain factories.

The makers of the traditional salt and lead-glazed wares had now to adapt their production to meet these new demands, and it was perhaps unfortunate that they found it necessary to seek inspiration from the more sophisticated styles of foreign Courts and Graeco-Roman art rather than pursuing their native craft within the sphere of its own limitations.

Salt-glazed stoneware had, since the beginning

of the century, been a staple product of the potteries, and the use of plaster-of-Paris moulds, introduced it is said by Ralph Daniel in 1740, made possible the casting of such pieces by means of pouring the liquid clay slip into the mould and allowing the porous surface of the plaster to absorb the moisture. The mould was then removed and the piece made ready for firing. Hollow vessels were cast in this way while dishes, lids, etc., were made by pressing a flat piece of clay into the surface of the mould. These methods greatly facilitated increased production and by the middle of the century salt-glazed ware had obtained a considerable market, some being exported to Holland. Two Dutchmen settling at Hot Lane, now Cobridge, are supposed to have introduced into this country the enamel painting with which, in a further attempt to emulate porcelain, much of it was decorated after 1750. This form of painting adopted by local artists was of various types and employed a strikingly contrasting palette including intense blues, pinks and greens. Besides Chinese themes, floral subjects and coloured grounds were used, presumably in imitation of Sévres. Commemorative pieces include teapots celebrating the wedding of George III in 1761 and portraits of popular figures such as Frederick the Great, at that time an ally of this country. Figures of various subjects, mostly inspired by Meissen originals, are known (on the evidence of his account book) to have been painted with enamel colours in the Kentish Town workshop of William Duesbury, later proprietor of the Derby Porcelain Factory. At Liverpool, transfer printing, generally of a brick-red colour, was applied with most pleasing effects by Saddler and Green. Two figures of Turks (Plate 41A) of about 1760 are illustrative of the influence of porcelain being more or less direct copies of models made by J. J. Kaendler at Meissen in 1745. William Read in his *Staffordshire Pottery Figures* states that the models in question were probably made at Longton Hall by William Littler. They are also known in Bow porcelain. Another method of decorating salt-glazed pieces was by filling incised patterns with blue colouring, a type known to collectors as 'Scratch blue'.

In spite of the fact that this ware continued to be made for more than twenty years after 1750, it is not really typical of the period. Its extreme hardness and slightly abrasive surface, which scratched silver, rendered it less agreeable to public taste by comparison with the cream-coloured wares perfected by Wedgwood, and by 1770 its manufacture had largely declined, ceasing altogether before 1790.

Although the importance of Staffordshire pottery makes it usual to discuss it quite separately from that made elsewhere, we may at this point make a brief digression in order to mention another class which, like salt-glaze, was to become outmoded by the use of new materials, namely the tin-glazed earthenware made principally at Lambeth, Bristol and Liverpool and known as English delftware. This type, largely derived from Italian and Dutch sources, was made in England as early as the sixteenth century. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Chinese influence had become predominant in the style of decoration, and continued to some extent during the remaining period of its manufacture. In addition to the simple blue-and-white, palette painting in polychrome was used extensively on a great variety of articles; also transfer painting. Besides plates, dishes and bowls, characteristic examples of English delftware are to be found in the shape of puzzle jugs, drug jars, pill-slabs for apothecaries and the so-called bricks with perforated tops, intended either for flower holders or receptacles for ink and quill pens. A large number of tiles was also made (Pl. 42A), a typical feature of some eighteenth-century houses being a recess lined with such tiles and containing a ceremonial wash-basin and water bottle. They were also used in the surrounds of fireplaces and for lining the walls of larders and shops.¹ Dated inscriptions occur frequently, also political slogans and the recording of events such as Lunardi's balloon ascent in 1783. In spite of the latter date delftware had largely gone out of fashion by the last quarter of the century, and like salt-glaze was not made after 1790.

¹ See 'An Introduction to Bristol Delftware Tiles', by Louis Lipaki, *The Connoisseur*, May 1953.

As we have already seen, it is in many instances quite impossible to draw an arbitrary date line within which we may state what is characteristic of one half of a century and not of the other. Many types are transitional, and it is therefore only possible to note their production during the particular period with which we are dealing. In this category must be included the mottled or tortoiseshell wares chiefly associated with the name of the famous Staffordshire potter Thomas Whieldon (born 1719) whose factory was at Fenton Low and with whom the young Wedgwood was working from 1754-9. These mottled effects were brought about by the blending of metallic oxides in a clear lead-glaze which was applied over a cream earthenware body. Manganese produced the rich madder-brown of the tortoiseshell, while other colours were obtained by the use of oxides of copper, iron and cobalt which caused brown, green, yellow, blue, purple and grey tones to mingle in the fluid glaze with pleasantly harmonious effects. Glazes stained with either a single colour, or in the various combinations described above, were used on pieces with both applied and moulded reliefs. They include teapots, coffee-pots, tea-caddies and the whole range of table wares. Figures, both human and animal, were also coloured in this way. The teapots and similar pieces sometimes show evidence of the silver-smith's influence (Pl. 418), while the later figures were in many instances suggested by foreign originals. They are nevertheless, unmistakably the work of a native craftsman, and as such no doubt found their way on to the shelves and mantelpieces of the local homesteads. Under the present heading mention may also be made of the agate or marbled effects obtained by the blending of various coloured clays. In the 'solid agate' these clays were used to form the body, but marbling was also simulated by applying them over a plain surface. A brilliant black glaze on red earthenware is also typical. It is often seen on tea and coffee-pots ornamented with small reliefs. The same shapes, together with a similar glaze, were also used at Jackfield in Shropshire, though the latter type is without relief decoration.

During his partnership with Whieldon, Wedg-

wood was continually experimenting with both technical and material improvements made in order to stimulate an increased demand for their products, as in spite of reduced prices lack of public interest had already been reflected in a steadily declining market. Among these improvements was the perfecting of a green glaze which he used in combination with yellow on teapots and other vessels made in imitation of fruit and vegetable forms, known as 'Cauliflower' and 'Pineapple' wares. Although excavations on the site of his factory show that Whieldon made the whole range of Staffordshire pottery favoured in his day, his productions were not marked. His fame as a potter, however, has caused a whole class to be identified with his name. He was a man of great integrity, and before his death in 1795 became Sheriff of his county.

The name of the Wood family is to many only connected with the making of Toby Jugs. They were, in fact, extremely versatile in their output. Of the two elder brothers, Aaron (born 1717) was the most celebrated 'block cutter' of his time, that is, he prepared the first intaglio moulds in alabaster or other hard substance from which, after the taking of a master cast, the plaster moulds already described were eventually obtained. He worked for most of the leading Staffordshire potters, including Whieldon, and was probably at some time in partnership with his brother Ralph. He is also credited with the making of some of the most interesting figures of which the so-called 'Pew Groups' are notable examples. Aaron's brother, Ralph (born 1715), and his son, Ralph junior (born 1748), besides making useful wares were, from about 1765 onwards, responsible for a large output of figures coloured in the Whieldon style. It is generally agreed, however, that they themselves were principally concerned with the



Incised

Fig. 1. On a 'block' in the British Museum.

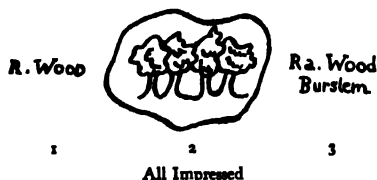


Fig. 2. 1 and 2 are believed to be the marks of R. Wood senior. 2 is supposed to be a rebus on the family name. About 1770. 3 is believed to be the mark of R. Wood junior. 1772-95.

1. VOYEZ
1788

Impressed

Fig. 3. Signature on a 'Fair Hebe' jug.

technicalities of manufacture rather than the creation of the types for which their name has become famous, and the best of the later models are confidently attributed to an itinerant artist of French extraction named Voyez. John Voyez was born about 1740 and was trained as a jeweller. On first coming to London he worked for a time at this trade and also as a carver for an artificial stone manufactory, exhibiting work in both wax and artificial stone at the Society of Artists in London, 1767-8. Josiah Wedgwood was originally responsible for bringing him to Staffordshire in 1768, but his habits were totally at variance with the former's high standards of moral rectitude, and after his disorderly conduct had led to a term of imprisonment their association terminated abruptly, though Wedgwood thought so highly of Voyez's abilities that he tried to deny his services to rival potters by bribing him not to work for them.³ But Voyez was not to be tempted and is known on the evidence of signed pieces to have worked for both Humphrey Palmer of Hanley and T. Hales of Cobridge. His association with the Wood factory is based on stylistic grounds, as no examples are known which bear both his signature and Ralph Wood's factory mark. The

³ See Herbert Read's *Staffordshire Pottery Figures*, London, 1924.

grotesque vessels known as Toby Jugs are perfect examples of rural English pottery of this period, adorning as they did the chimney pieces of farm houses and cottages. It is thought that their original form was inspired by engravings of 'Toby Philpot', the subject of a song called 'The Brown Jug' translated from the Latin by Francis Fawkes and published in 1761. The subjects are, however, considerably varied, names being applied to them such as 'The Thin Man', 'The Planter', 'Martha Gunn', 'Prince Hal', (Pl. 42c), etc. In the catalogue of the late Captain Price's collection it is suggested that the last named represents George IV, when Prince of Wales, masquerading at a Brighton ball as Bluff King Hal. Toby Jugs were made by other potters besides the Woods, and have continued to the present day, generally with steadily declining merit. Well known examples of Voyez's work are the rustic jug moulded in the form of a tree trunk with figures in relief, and an inscription 'Fair Hebe' (Pl. 42b). These are often signed and dated 1788.³ Other figures from the Ralph Wood factory include copies of originals by Paul Louis Cyfflé of Luneville, musicians, pastoral and classical subjects and satirical groups such as 'The Vicar and Moses' in a double-decked pulpit. In addition to colouring in the Whieldon style the Woods developed a method of laying the metallic oxides on under the glaze into which they were partly absorbed, a technique that produced beautiful and characteristic effects. The elder Ralph died in 1772, and his son in 1795.

Enoch (born 1759) was the son of the block-cutter Aaron. He was in partnership with his cousin from 1783-90, and James Caldwell from 1790-1818. Enoch was a modeller on his own account though his work lacks distinction. A number of busts such as those of George Washington and the preachers Whitfield and Wesley are the best known examples. The latter was modelled from life in 1781. He also made figures, some of which are of considerable size.

³ The author had in his possession an example stamped with the mark ASTBURY, indicating that it was made by R. M. Astbury, who directed a factory at Fenton, 1785-1800.

ENOCH WOOD & Co E WOOD

ENOCH WOOD
SCULPTIST

WOOD & CALDWELL

All Impressed

Fig. 4. Marks used by Enoch Wood. His partnership with Caldwell was from 1790 to 1818.

During this later period the practice already used by the china factories of painting in opaque enamel colours over the glaze was adopted. This lacked the charm of the earlier methods and has not proved practical, as the colours usually flake off with the passing of time. Enoch, who did not die until 1840, came to be known as the 'Father of the Potteries'.

Some critics have accused Wedgwood of spoiling a native art by turning it into a manufacture and urging his employees to desert nature and seek inspiration in examples created by an archaic civilization; but these criticisms, although undoubtedly merited in some respects, do less than justice if they cause us to ignore his mighty achievements both in the field of technical improvement and in the setting up of a great industry demanding the highest standards, not only in the materials used but in the craftsmanship applied to them. Even the most individual spirits cannot remain uninfluenced by the tastes and fashions of their times, and in this respect Wedgwood was not the creator of the neo-classical movement, though he found himself in complete harmony with the aims and ideals of its devotees. Although as a potter he may not have been a great creative artist, he was undoubtedly an extremely competent one; and it is surely remarkable that a man who had received only an elementary education should have been able to engage successfully in experiments that today would be regarded as the work of highly skilled experts.

A man of strong social and moral convictions, his sympathies lay with the American Colonies in their fight for independence. He also joined the campaign for the abolition of slavery. A medallion of a slave in black and white Jasper ware, modelled at the factory by William Hackwood, and inscribed 'Am I not a man and a brother' was

adopted as the seal of the Slave Emancipation Society, of which Wedgwood was a keen supporter. Yet in spite of these activities his achievements secured for him the highest social contacts, including the frequent patronage of Royalty. The *London Ledger*, 1793-1806 shows an order placed by Queen Charlotte in 1795, listed ⁴ as follows:

'12 Milkpans	6 Dog Pans
Sundries	3 Dog Pans
18 Plates Green Ivy	Silver Spout
	'Teapot
2 Teapots	Jasper Vases and
	Gerandoles
6 Plates Green Ivy	2 Toy Tea Sets
	Sandwich Set'

Born in 1730 at Burslem in Staffordshire, Josiah Wedgwood was, at the age of 14, apprenticed to his brother Thomas who had inherited the family business known as the Churchyard Pottery. His apprenticeship lasted for five years, but it seems unlikely that he left the Churchyard before 1752, when he went to Stoke and entered into a partnership with John Harrison at the factory of Thomas Alders. This does not appear to have been of long duration and was followed, as we have seen, by his association with Whieldon from 1754-9. During this time he accumulated sufficient capital and experience to set up on his own account at the Ivy House, Burslem, where he continued to produce the Whieldon types with improvements in the shapes and glazes. Being a man of great foresight and business acumen, he was quick to realize that these were already declining in popularity, and to see before him the possibility of capturing a large market if he could offer to the public something which should be without the practical disadvantages of salt-glaze and at the same time of a sufficiently stable body and colour to be produced in large quantities at a price that would make it available to all classes. To this end he set about a further refining of the cream-coloured earthenware body used by Whieldon and the earlier potters. His business promises

⁴ *Catalogue of Early Wedgwood Pottery Exhibition*, Josiah Wedgwood & Sons, 1951.

were extended in 1764 to include the neighbouring Brick House Works, later known as The Bell House, and by 1765 he had so far progressed in the making of cream ware as to obtain the patronage of Queen Charlotte and the right to name his new product Queensware, a type which with continued improvements was to capture a world market. The early factory decoration of Queensware is of a simple classical style, but much was sold in the white to be painted elsewhere, as well as being sent to Liverpool for transfer printing by Saddler and Green. It was readily adaptable to every kind of use and Wedgwood made from it articles ranging from dairy and culinary equipment to the Imperial Russian Service, consisting of 952 pieces, made in 1773 to the order of the Empress Catherine II and known as the 'Frog Service', owing to the fact that it was to be placed in the Palace of La Grenouille near St Petersburg and has the device of a green frog in a shield painted on the border of each piece (Pl. 43A). It is further decorated with English views in dark purple monochrome. The eventual cost of this service was about £3,500, on which only a small profit was made.

While visiting Liverpool in 1762 Wedgwood first met the merchant Thomas Bentley, who, it is said, inspired him with his love for the antique. The friendship and mutual interest between the two men grew steadily, and in 1768 a partnership was decided upon and Wedgwood commenced the building of the great manufactory just outside Burslem which he named 'Etruria', Greek vases at that time being thought Etruscan. In the same year he opened a large London showroom in Newport Street.

The partnership with Bentley was for the making of ornamental pieces only, the ordinary wares continuing for a few more years to be made at the Bell House. By 1769 the premises at 'Etruria' were completed and opened, and Wedgwood was now fairly launched on his projects to emulate the examples of antiquity.

In his search for materials other than the cream and marble bodies suitable for this purpose, he had once again made use of a local product, namely the black unglazed pottery known as 'Egyptian

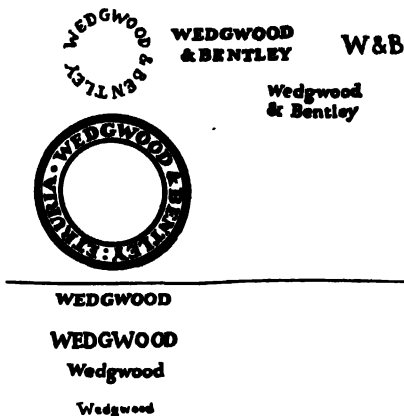


Fig. 5. Specimens of the marks generally used by Wedgwood. Those above the line are of the Wedgwood and Bentley period, 1769-80; those below are later marks, from 1771 on useful wares, and from 1780 onwards on all classes. The mark was of various sizes, the letters being sometimes in upper and sometimes lower case. All impressed.

Black'. This he improved and refined to obtain a fine quality black stoneware of extreme hardness from which he made many vases and other pieces, naming them 'Black Basaltes'. Some of these vases, in addition to being decorated with engine turning, were 'bronzed with light gilding, and others painted with 'encaustic' enamel in imitation of Greek vases. The latter work was probably done at an enamelling establishment opened in Chelsea in 1769 under the supervision of Thomas Bentley. The Frog Service was certainly painted there. Besides the usual domestic articles a series of busts for library decoration were made in black basaltes, also figures; that of Voltaire (Pl. 44A) made about 1777 is a well-known example. It was also used for the making of small relief medallions to meet the current vogue for collecting cameos in cabinets; the originals being too costly for the ordinary purse, most people had to be contented with imitations made in inexpensive materials. Among other unglazed bodies were the buff-coloured 'cane ware' and a red stoneware called

by Wedgwood 'rosso antico'. It is interesting to note that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the scarcity of flour was so acute that imitation pie-crusts made of cane ware were used instead of the real thing.

Best known of all Wedgwood's creations are the coloured ground or 'jasper' wares, and one has only to think of a room designed by Robert Adam to realize how admirably suited they were to the surroundings in which they were so often incorporated.

Once again the problems of composition arose and were solved by patient research and experiment. A pure white stoneware capable of tinting throughout with oxides was the basic requirement for the making of the coloured bodies and white reliefs. Barium sulphate obtained in a mineral form from Derbyshire, where it was called 'cawk', was found to be the necessary ingredient, and by the end of 1775 jasper was being made in two or three shades. The range was soon increased and instead of being tinted throughout the pieces were immersed in a solution that coloured the outer surface only, referred to as 'jasper dip'. The most usual colour is light blue; a darker blue, two shades of green, lavender, lilac, black and rarely yellow were also used; while for the famous copies of the 'Barbarini' or 'Portland Vase', started in 1786, the body was of a blue-black 'solid jasper' in imitation of the glass from which the original was made.

Many of the forms in jasper repeat those of the black basaltes and are too well known to warrant description. It was however put to innumerable uses. Wedgwood himself lists 38 different items in a single order made by a merchant in Manchester for supply to the King of Naples,⁶ from which the following examples are taken:

Rings.	Coach Panels.
Snuff Boxes.	Swords.
Window Shutters.	Chairs.
Metal Boxes.	Cabinets.
Door Handles.	Watches.

Buffets.	Desks.
Chest of Drawers.	Metal Lamps.
Chatelaines.	Buckles.
Etui Cases.	Daggers.
Bell Pulls.	Opera Glasses.
Smelling Bottles, etc.	Coat Buttons.

The metal work on pieces mounted in ormolu and cut steel jewellery (Pl. 44b) was carried out by the Birmingham metal workers Boulton & Watt, with whom Wedgwood was constantly in touch.

About 1780 a white semi-porcellaneous version of the Queensware was perfected and named 'Pearl Ware'. This was used largely for services made in competition with the china makers. Silver and coloured lustres also came into use in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. A well-known example is the pink variety often found on services made in the shape of shells. Enamel painting in the Chinese style on the black basaltes was also done, though the combination appears entirely incongruous.

Wedgwood was tireless in his efforts to obtain not only the highest standards of workmanship but also to seek out the best examples of antiquity which could be adapted to his uses. To this end he employed many well-known artists and craftsmen, as well as gaining access to famous collections such as that of the Duke of Marlborough. James Tassie, well known for his casts of antique gems, worked for him, also John Flaxman the famous sculptor, who, together with Henry Webber, spent some time in Rome supervising the making of reductions and adaptations from the antique for use at the factory. The wax modellers Mathew and Isaac Gosset are known to have worked on a series of contemporary celebrities known as the 'Illustrious Moderns', with William Hackwood, for many years principal modeller at the factory. Besides the work of professionals, some charming designs in relief of women and children are attributed to Lady Templetown, Lady Diana Beauclerke and a Miss Crew. George Stubbs, the celebrated animal and portrait painter, who was a friend of Wedgwood's, also designed a number of relief medallions of equestrian subjects. Many

⁶ See Wolf Mankowitz, *Wedgwood*, London, 1953, p. 108.

other names are known, but space forbids their inclusion here. All work was subject to Wedgwood's supervision, being altered or adapted at his discretion, and this, together with the fact that names of individual artists were rarely allowed to appear, sometimes makes personal attributions largely conjectural.

Thomas Bentley died in 1780 and in 1790 Wedgwood's three surviving sons, John, Josiah and Thomas and his nephew, Thomas Byerley, were taken into partnership. Within three years however Wedgwood senior, Josiah II and Byerley alone remained. In 1795 the founder himself died and Byerley in 1810.

It was inevitable that, as the creator of new materials and forms of ceramic expression, Wedgwood should have a host of followers. The Queensware was copied by most of the potters of his time, and even rivalled in quality, notably by that made at Leeds in Yorkshire; while the jaspers, besides inspiring local imitators such as William Adams, John Turner and Samuel Hollins, compelled even the great continental factories of Sévres and Meissen to follow the English example.

The pottery industry from the Midlands to north of the Border was now well on the way to complete industrialization and therefore largely stereotyped in its products. The figures of John Walton, with their clumsy tree-stump supports and vivid green foliage, are obvious copies of Chelsea Derby porcelain, but a certain degree of originality is shown in the blue, green and orange palette of the so-called Pratt wares, while the firm of J. Neale & Co., later Neale & Wilson, made figures and table wares of good quality, often tastefully painted with bright enamel colours. Fresh inspiration was, however, lacking, and the nineteenth century produced no innovators capable of leading a new revival.



Fig. 6. Impressed on a scroll. Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.



NEALE & Co
NEALE & Wilson
WILSON



Fig. 7. The marks of Neale & Co. and Neale & Wilson. Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. All impressed.

Porcelain

Unlike earthenware English porcelain had no roots in the national tradition. It was a new and untried medium with high costs and hazards of production that caused its makers to cater essentially for the tastes of the fashionable and monied classes rather than the humbler sections of the community.

The first porcelain seen in Europe was imported from China and was so highly prized that attempts were continually made to discover the secrets of its composition, the great distinction being its whiteness and translucency compared to the dense opacity of earthenware.

In the sixteenth and late seventeenth centuries soft paste or artificial bodies were achieved in Italy and France, but true porcelain in the Chinese sense was not made in Europe until Johann Friedrich Böttger, working at Meissen in 1709, discovered the secret of compounding china clay (kaolin) with china stone (petuntse). These, when fired at a high temperature, combine to form the hard vitrified material known as hard paste or true porcelain. This discovery, which was of immense financial value, was jealously guarded, Böttger being kept a virtual prisoner by Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony, under whose patronage the great German factory near Dresden was established in 1710.

In England no such discovery was forthcoming and, with the exception of that made by William Cookworthy at Plymouth 1768-70, and later by Champion of Bristol, who sold the patent to New Hall, all English porcelain was of the soft paste variety. In the foregoing circumstances it was

inevitable that Meissen, or Dresden china as it is better known, should become the model on which the first English styles were based, the majority being close imitations; though silver was also copied, particularly at Chelsea. Early English porcelain is, by reason of its paste, glaze and restrained decoration, of a quality equal to anything made elsewhere. It does not, however, come within the scope of this survey as by 1760 the baroque force of Meissen had given way to the rococo extravagances of the royal factory at Sèvres. Nowhere was this change more apparent than at the Chelsea factory, where the proprietor, Nicholas Sprimont, had inaugurated the final phase of production known, from the mark used, as the 'gold anchor' period (1758-70). Previously figures made in England had, like their German counterparts, been designed for use principally as table decorations and therefore could be viewed from any angle. Now, however, they had become popular as garnitures for mantelpieces and china cabinets, and the simple mound bases gave way to rococo scroll work mounted on feet, a design more suggestive of ormolu than porcelain. These bases were picked out in bright colours and gilding, while trees with branching foliage and flowers (bocage) often formed the background against which the figures were set, either singly, or as groups, the largest and most famous of the latter being the 'Music Lesson' (Pl. 45) taken from a painting by Boucher. Other groups of unusual size are a 'Roman Charity' and a pieta, while the best of the single figures include two finely



Fig. 10. Marks used on Chelsea porcelain during the 'gold anchor' period, 1758-69. 1 and 2 are in gold. 3 is impressed and is the mark of a 'repairer' (one who moulds and assembles the model) and not that of Roubiliac the sculptor as is sometimes supposed.

modelled Harvesters (Pl. 46A), a set of Apollo and the Muses and another set known as the Ranelagh Masqueraders.

The diarist * Mrs Philip Lybbe Powys, who wrote during the years 1756 to 1808, and who gives a glimpse of the domestic activities of the upper classes of those days, does not fail to mention china collections. 'Lady Dashwood's china-room,' she observed after a visit in 1778 to Kirklington Park, 'is the most elegant I ever saw. 'Tis under the flight of stairs going into the garden; it's ornamented with the finest pieces of the oldest china, and the recesses and shelves painted pea-green and white, the edges being green in a mosaic pattern. Her Ladyship said she must try my judgement in china, as she ever did all the visitors of that closet, as there was one piece there so much superior to the others. I thought myself fortunate that a prodigious fine old Japan dish almost at once struck my eye.'

A larger and more splendid collection was at Blenheim. It delighted the Duchess of Northumberland when she saw it in 1752: 'We were also shown a little China Room, very prettily fitted up in which is the China presented by the K. of Poland to the present Duke.' This china closet was not the one which the indefatigable Mrs Lybbe Powys saw at Blenheim in 1799: 'I went in the post-chaise to Blenheim, to see the new china-rooms. They are not in the house, but built just after you enter the park, four little rooms fill'd with all sorts of old china fix'd to the walls by three screws, one of which takes out to let them be removed, others are placed on pedestals or shelves. The whole has a pretty effect, but to



Fig. 8. Marks on Plymouth porcelain, 1768-70.



Fig. 9. Marks on Bristol porcelain (Champion's factory), c. 1770-81.

* Quoted in 'The China Case and China Closet', by R. W. Symonds - *The Connoisseur*, June 1952, p. 11.

others might be more amusing than to Lady Hardy and myself, as each of us has most of the same sort.' The Blenheim 'China Gallery' was fitted up in 1796, 'an additional attraction to the visitors of Blenheim, who delight in the antique, rich, and curious specimens of the porcelain, delf, and japan manufacture'.⁷

The ground colours of Sèvres were also imitated, such as the 'gros bleu' (called 'mazarine' blue), a rich claret (contemporarily 'crimson'), also green, turquoise and yellow. Typical examples of these ground colours are seen on the sets of elaborate rococo vases lavishly gilded and painted with figure subjects after Rubens, Boucher and Teniers. Chinoiseries in the style of Watteau and Pillement were also popular, together with birds, flowers and fruit. Famous among the vases is the claret-ground set of seven, once in the possession of Lord Dudley and now in Lord Bearsted's collection.⁸ They are painted with mythological subjects and birds in the manner of Hondecoeter. The Huntington Art Gallery in California also possesses a fine pair and they are well represented in the British and Victoria and Albert Museums.

The table wares were no less magnificent in their ground colours and painting; a superb example is a tea and coffee service, the bequest of Emily Thompson, which may be seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Even more elaborate is the enormous equipage given in 1763 by George III and Queen Charlotte to the latter's brother, the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. It is

mentioned by Horace Walpole as consisting of 'dishes, plates without number, an epergne, (Pl. 46b) candlesticks, salt-cellars, sauceboats and tea and coffee equipages costing £1,200'. He adds, however, 'I cannot boast of our taste; the forms are neither new, beautiful, nor various. Yet Sprimont the manufacturer is a Frenchman. It seems their taste will not bear transplanting.' This service, which is decorated with exotic birds and flowers within mazarine-blue and gilt borders, is now in the private collection of H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother; but a damaged pair of candelabra was sold by the steward of the Duke's household and is in the Schreiber collection at South Kensington. In the private collection of Her Majesty the Queen are two remarkable clocks with claret grounds, gilt scroll work and pastoral figures in the style of Boucher.

A charming feature of this period, although they were also made earlier, are the miniature objects known as 'Chelsea toys'. They are of a great variety, including tiny figures, in which seals were set, thimbles, étuis, scent-bottles, bonbonnières, etc. (Pl. 47A). These last were often mounted in gold, the bonbonnières having painted enamel lids. The scent-bottles were contained in shagreen cases and were often carried by ladies on coach journeys.⁹ Chelsea toys almost invariably bear inscriptions in French which are, however, frequently misspelt.

In 1769 Sprimont sold the factory to James Cox who, in the following year, re-sold it to William Duesbury and John Heath of Derby. Duesbury continued for a number of years to use the premises, the productions of this period being known as Chelsea-Derby. They are in most cases somewhat insipid in character and not typical of the best of either factory. The table wares usually follow the style of decoration favoured by the neo-classical revival, while the figures are pale echoes of their predecessors. In 1784 the factory was finally closed and the moulds and workmen removed to Derby.

Although Bow ranks with Chelsea as the first

⁷ It seems obvious that the above cannot refer to English porcelain. In the first paragraph Mrs Lybbe Powys is speaking of a visit to a porcelain-room which she made in 1778, and states that it is 'ornamented with the finest pieces of the oldest china': this could hardly apply to English porcelain made only twenty or thirty years previously, and the 'fine old Japan dish' was probably oriental. In the second paragraph the Duchess of Northumberland's visit to Blenheim was in 1752, and the 'K of Poland' was the Elector of Saxony, owner of the Meissen factory: it would seem, therefore, that whatever porcelain he gave to the Duke of Marlborough most likely came from that establishment. The 'delf' is presumably Delft, and would be tin-glazed earthenware, while that of 'Japan manufacture' would, again, be oriental.

⁸ On loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

⁹ See G. E. Bryant, *The Chelsea Porcelain Toys*, London, 1925.



Fig. 11. Marks found on Bow porcelain from 1760 onwards.

of the great factories very little of any consequence or originality was made there after 1760. The rococo style prevailed in the forms, which were similar to those of Chelsea, while much of the bright colouring was probably applied outside the factory. One of the owners, Wetherby, died in 1762, and his partner John Crowther went bankrupt in the following year. After this the history becomes obscure. Like Chelsea, it was probably financed by Duesbury and removed to Derby about 1775. A valuable contribution to the making of porcelain which originated at Bow was the use of bone ash in the paste. This made production less hazardous as it stabilized the body and helped to prevent collapsing in the kiln.

Of the early factories, Longton Hall closed in 1760, and only three, Worcester, Derby and Lowestoft, survived into the nineteenth century. The two former are still flourishing, but Lowestoft closed in 1802. This Suffolk factory could lay claim to few of the pretensions of its rivals. Its wares were for the most part of a utilitarian character and catered for a less opulent market. Many pieces bear scenes and inscriptions relating to the locality, typical examples being the well-known inkwells, mugs, etc., inscribed 'a Trifle from Lowestoft'. No recognized marks were used, and owing to the publication of a notorious mistake much Chinese export porcelain has been wrongly attributed to this source.

Worcester during its best period (1751-83) was under the direction of Dr Wall, the founder, and William Davis a partner and manager. The figures made there were negligible both in quantity and quality, but in the sphere of table wares, vases, etc., their work was unsurpassed.

One invention, which, although it did not originate at the factory, was more widely prac-

tised there than elsewhere, was transfer printing, chiefly in black, over the glaze. This method, of which Robert Hancock the engraver was the chief exponent, may be claimed as an original English contribution to ceramic art. It was used at Worcester from about 1757 onwards and forms an interesting group, mainly depicting the scenes and customs of the time. Armorial and commemorative pieces were also made, the best known of the latter being the signed and dated mugs with portraits of the King of Prussia (Pl. 48A). Chinoiserie in the manner of Pillement were another feature.

In 1769 there was a migration of workers from Chelsea to Worcester, after which the rich ground colours and gilding of the former factory predominated in the more ambitious productions. Coloured fish-scale grounds, ultimately derived from Meissen, were also a great feature, blue being the most usual. They are often seen in combination with exotic birds (the 'fantastic vogel' of Meissen) painted in panels (Pl. 48B). Oriental influences appear in the so-called 'Japan patterns' and various chinoiserie, the neo-classical style coming later.

A number of celebrated services were made, to which the name of distinguished patrons have been attached. One of the best known is supposed to have been made for William Henry, Duke of Gloucester. It is painted in the centre with large clusters of fruit within gilt and green borders intersected by compartments with sprays of fruit and insects.

The best known painters of Worcester porcelain are John Donaldson, the miniaturist, and Jeffrey Hamet O'Neale. Much outside decoration was also done in the London workshop of James Giles.

After the death of Dr Wall in 1776 and William Davis in 1783, various changes in ownership and partners caused the firm to come successively under the management of Thomas Flight, Flight and Barr, and Barr Flight & Barr, the last partnership ending in 1813. Robert Chamberlain, another member of the firm, having seceded in 1789, set up first as a decorator and later a manufacturer in opposition. The last phase is characterized by

THE LATE GEORGIAN PERIOD

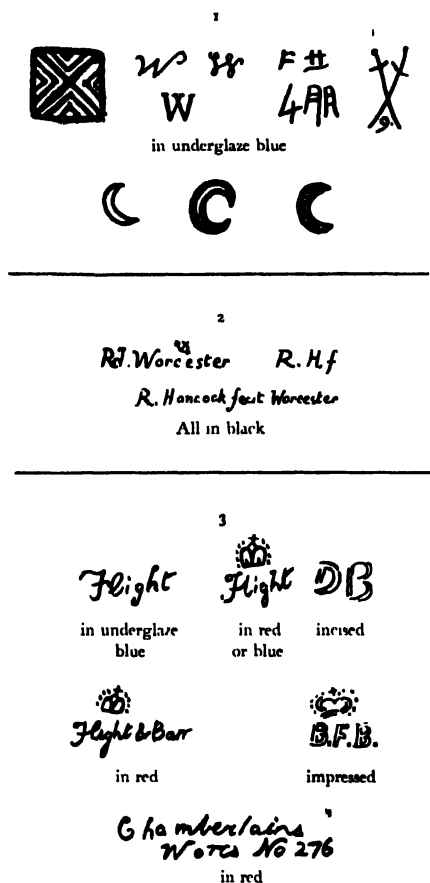


Fig. 12. Marks on Worcester porcelain. 1 and 2 were used during the Dr Wall period, 1752-83. The pseudo-Oriental characters occur on pieces of the 'Japan patterns', about 1760-75, and the crossed swords are in imitation of Meissen; the number is sometimes 91. The fretted square is of Chinese origin. 2 shows the marks of Robert Hancock found on transfer printed pieces. The anchor is thought to be a rebus on the name of Richard Holdship, who was in charge of the printing department: it also occurs on pieces signed in full by Hancock. 3 shows the marks of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

the somewhat pompous Empire style favoured in the early nineteenth century.

The great beauty attained in the early days at Derby was not fulfilled during the middle period. Many figures were made, some depicting contemporary notabilities; that of David Garrick in the character of King Richard III is a familiar example. This was modelled from an engraving by J. Dixon, published in 1772, after the painting by Nathaniel Dance, exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1771. In most instances, however, Meissen was once again the source of inspiration. The colours are generally bright, a dry turquoise blue which tended to discolour and become brown, being particularly characteristic. The Continental

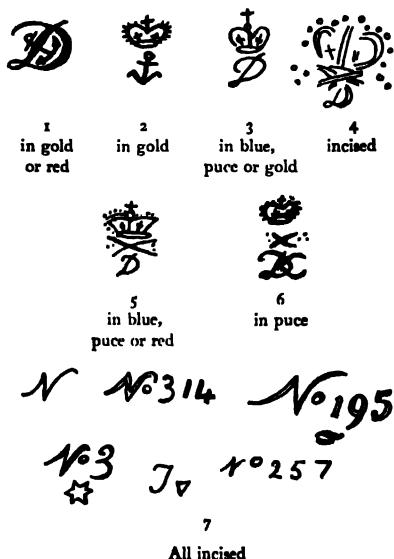


Fig. 13. Derby factory marks. 1 is usual on Chelsea-Derby porcelain, 1770-84. 2 is about 1770-80. 3 is about 1780-4. 4 is incised on figures 1770-80. 5 is about 1784-1810, the red mark is late. 6 is the mark of Duesbury and Kean, about 1795. 7 shows marks incised on figures 1770-1800, they are the catalogue numbers of the model. The symbols are those of 'repairers'.



[a] A pair of figures of Tsuchi, after models in Meissen porcelain by Johann Joachim Kändler. Half-glazed stoneware, painted with enamel colours, c. 1760.
Private and Albert Meyer.



[b] Galleijepot, stoneware with mottled glaze ('schwarzschaff' ware). Southwold, c. 1760. Height 14 in.
Private and Albert Meyer.

THE LATE GEORGIAN PERIOD



(a) Bellflower vase of the eighteenth century, c. 1785, in polychrome with iron-oxidation border. The Strand-Depot Gallery.



(a) Jug, modelled by James Vaux, inscribed on the reverse side 'Fair Helen', and signed and dated J. Vaux, 1788. Vaux and Albert Museum.



(a) 'Prince Hal' Toby jug by Robert Moon, Burslem, c. 1785. Height 10 in. Earl Maritime of Halifax Collection.



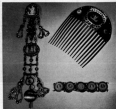
(a) A plate from the Empress Catherine of Russia Service, cream-ware painted in blackish purple monochrome, the centre in green. Wedgwood, 1772-4. Study Museum, *Engl.*

(b) A plate with blue pink border and gold edging. Painted in the centre with a spray of poppies by William 'Quaker' Pegg. These poppies are similar to a spray in Pegg's own sketch book, which has numbered and is now in the Derby Museum. Black, a crown with enamel (brown and D. in blue. Derby, c. 1800. G. R. Capital-Gallery.





(a) Figure of a woman in black coat and skirt. Wood-
carved, Estonia, c. 1777-80. *Finland and Other Regions.*



(b) Comb, mirror and bracelet, carved (upper part mounted in cut-
wood). Woodcarved, Estonia, c. 1780-90.
Finland and Other Regions.



'The Music Lesson', adapted from a painting by François Boucher, entitled 'L'Agreeable Leçon', porcelain painted in colours. Mark, an anchor in gold and 'W' impressed. Chelsea, c. 1769. Victoria and Albert Museum.



(15) Pair of Chertsev figures, 'The Harpocrates', Height 21 in., dark, no another in gold, 1770-80, Mrs H. Long-Bartholomew Collection.



(16) The design from the service given by King George III and Queen Charlotte to the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, 'Minervina'. Blue ground covered with (muslin in gold), enclosing patch painted with blossoms of flowers, black, another in gold, Chertsev, c. 1780. In private possession of H.M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.



(x) *Bouillottes* and vases. Chelsea porcelain, c. 1755-65. Victoria and Albert Museum.



(x) Three grouped pieces, representing the Royal Family, after a painting by Zoffany, unglazed porcelain (hard-paste), Derby, c. 1775. By permission of H.M. The Queen.



(B) Vase and cover, with wide-body ground and large shaped panels painted with scenes (only some seen and broken). Mark, a bird's foot, is on the lid. *Manufacture, c. 1770. Private collection.*



(C) A large, rounder jar in black with a full length of Frederick the Great, and a battle scene in the background. On the reverse is a large display of arms and flags. *Manufacture, c. 1770. Private collection.*

influence is further seen in a class of white, unglazed biscuit groups intended to imitate marble, which were a speciality of the factory. One of the first and most important works in this medium is grouped as three figures representing the Royal Family after a painting by Zoffany (Pl. 47a): The only complete set known is in the possession of Her Majesty the Queen. Some of the later models are by J. J. Spengler, son of the director of the Zurich Porcelain factory, who was at Derby from 1790-5.

Decoration on the later table wares, vases, etc., was of a very high standard and many talented artists were at work. Zachariah Boreman painted landscapes, James Banford and John and Robert Brewer figures, landscapes and other subjects, while the naturalistic flowers of William Billingsley and William Pegg (Pl. 43a) are notable, as are the pink monochromes in the Sèvres style by Richard Askew, and the birds of Complin.

Others were Fiddle Duvivier, Lawton and Hill.

William Duesbury died in 1786 and was succeeded by his son of the same name, who, in 1795 took a miniature painter, Michael Kean, into partnership. The second Duesbury died in the following year and Kean carried on the factory until 1811.

Outside the larger establishments porcelain was also being made at Coalport in Shropshire and Pinxton in Derbyshire, as well as at Liverpool. But by the end of the eighteenth century the greater part of the industry was concentrated in Staffordshire, the chief makers being New Hall, Spode, Minton, Davenport and Ridgeway. Josiah Spode had introduced the bone porcelain which henceforth became the standard English body, and everywhere the advance of industrialization brought with it a degree of similarity that makes individual descriptions largely superfluous.

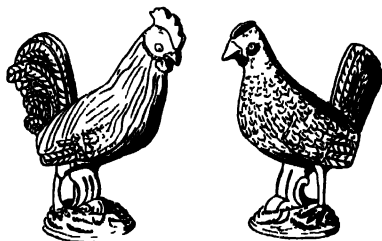


Fig. 14. Staffordshire pottery cock and hen, late eighteenth century. 8½" and 7½". Schreiber Collection in Victoria and Albert Museum.

Domestic Metalwork

Domestic Metalwork

G. BERNARD HUGHES

Late Georgians took a lively pleasure in the metalwork that graced their homes. Never had its quality been so fine nor lent itself to such varied treatment; never had there been such a range of wares to ensure the requisite air of elegance, and never again, perhaps, would there be such a solid basis of traditional good craftsmanship to ensure lastingly beautiful, satisfying design and execution.

Sheffield plate brought, to more modest homes, much of the gracious loveliness of silver; brass shone with a newly-won golden brilliance; heart-warming copper wares enriched living rooms as well as kitchen quarters, but were rivalled by the rainbow brilliance of japanned iron. The cool sheen of burnished steel was never more perfectly displayed, and the fading beauties of pewter were superseded in the home by the tougher, more lastingly clear-toned Britannia metal. And behind every one of these developments, as behind many other associated refinements, was an English invention.

Sheffield plate had been invented by Thomas Bolsover in 1742. It was an inestimable boon to the less-than-wealthy home: almost everything made in silver was repeated in what, until about 1770, was known as copper rolled plate. Sheffield plate domestic ware dates no earlier than 1758 when Joseph Hancock established the trade in Sheffield, having devised the lapped edge which hid the streak of copper beneath the silver that had declared itself wherever a cut edge was visible. By the early 1760's his range of domestic hollow-ware was considerable, all heavily lined with tin

until the invention of double-sided plate in the early 1770's.

Chronology of Sheffield plate

Edgings and mounts on pieces of Sheffield plate display a chronology of improvements by which late Georgian examples may be grouped into six classes. These are: (1) single lapped edge, 1758-80; (2) double lapped copper mounts, 1768-early nineteenth century; (3) silver lapped mounts, 1775-1815; (4) solid silver mounts, 1780-1830; (5) drawn silver wire mounts, 1785-1820; (6) silver stamped mounts from the early 1790's. Much of the work was hand-raised but stamped lids and spouts were introduced in the 1780's, and flat and plain work was shaped by stamping from the early 1790's; the spinning of hollow-ware dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Domestic table ware in production by 1790 might be listed to the number of one hundred and fifty different articles, some of which, such as candlesticks and cruet sets, were issued in hundreds of different patterns. Dinner and dessert services were selling at the factory for from fifty to three hundred guineas and breakfast sets for as much as two hundred guineas. At this time Sheffield plate was selling at about one-third the price of silver plate, which from 1782 was taxed to the extent of sixpence an ounce.

Proof of success was the devastating effect on the craft of silversmithing despite efforts at price-cutting factory methods. In 1797 the Goldsmiths' Company, on behalf of the Birmingham

silversmiths, petitioned the government complaining that 'plated ware manufacturers have produced articles of the highest elegance and fashion, many of which are now made with solid silver borders, shields, ornaments, finished in exact resemblance of real plate'. A request was made that an excise duty of threepence an ounce should be placed on plated ware and that platers should be compelled to strike name or initials and the word 'plated' on each piece. It had been optional since 1784 to strike these, together with a registered trade mark or device. The plate varied in quality, ten to twelve ounces of sterling silver to eight pounds of copper being the standard proportions. When deep-cut engraving was required the thickness of the silver was doubled.

Candlesticks and candelabra

Candles of wax and tallow were still the most usual source of domestic illumination when George III was crowned. Chandeliers of brass and latten had been replaced for the most part by gilded wood and glass lustres. With these, in drawing- and dining-rooms, appeared shapely Sheffield plate table candlesticks and candelabra, their bold designs rendered adequately stable by fillings of melted resin and sand.

The classic ornament that swept through English industrial design during the 1760's revolutionized candlestick styles. Traditional baluster forms were outmoded by shouldered stems with vertical outlines. In Sheffield plate the stem was usually circular, tapering towards a round foot. Until the late 1770's it was without ornament: then stem and socket might be gadrooned and the lower stem fluted. The four-sided shouldered stem was also made, tapering to a square foot. There were architectural columns too, until the 1780's, capital and base usually matching their order. Less costly were the cylindrical stems, with trumpet-shaped feet at first and with square feet from about 1790. The variety of candlestick designs is beyond computation, but they follow definite fashion styles.

Branches were fitted to Sheffield plate candlesticks from the 1760's: from about 1780 it was customary for these to twist around a central finial rising from the pillar. To strengthen them and to

assist stability, their arms were filled with soft solder.

Brass candlesticks were made in ever-increasing numbers during this period, price reductions and increased prosperity taking them into new homes. A new process applied to casting made it possible for stem and socket to be made in a single hollow piece, thus obviating the disfiguring hair-line marks of the vertical joins (Pl. 50A). The foot was cast separately and attached.

The major feature of brass history of this period, however, was the new brass composed of copper and zinc patented by James Emerson in 1770. This brass was described by R. Watson in *Chemical Essays*, 1786, as being 'more malleable, more beautiful, and of a colour more resembling gold than brass containing calamine'. It produced clear-cut modelling of a quality formerly attainable only by the costly use of princes metal and pinchbecks and the surface was rarely disfigured by pitting. The demand for table candlesticks in the new brass became enormous and by 1780 was responsible for the establishment of a new specialist trade.

Brass candlesticks of the early 1760's were for the most part square-footed with plain edges; moulded edges appeared by 1765 and the now rare gadrooned edge by 1770. Stems varied between the plain, attenuated baluster rising from one or two knops, and the plain or fluted column rising from the flat platform of a stepped plinth. From about 1780 to the end of the period the most popular stem was in the form of an elongated cone, round or square in section, and generally fluted, with a high pyramid or domed foot. The telescopic candlestick, found also in Sheffield plate, was patented in 1796 and had a considerable vogue.

Numerous other domestic accessories were cast in Emerson's brass and double gilded, such as pastille burners, girandoles, inkstands, paperweights, thermometer stands, watch stands, busts and figures of animals.

Crusie lamps in brass and copper

Open-flame crusie lamps in brass or copper plate came into widespread use from the early

1760's and continued into the Regency period. Such lamps might hang as chandeliers; others were table lamps, the design usually including a hollow stem rising from a spreading foot, pedestal and foot being weighted with sand.

Improvements in oil refining, wick manufacture and lamp designing at this time increased efficiency and resulted in almost smokeless and non-odorous illumination. For the first time the cylindrical reservoir was provided with a hinged lid, the straight tubular burner was fully enclosed, and oil dripping was prevented. Each burner — there might be as many as thirty — gave a yellowish flame equal to about two ordinary modern candles.

The Argand lamp in Sheffield plate and in brass appeared on the domestic scene in the 1780's, burning a tubular wick that provided an air passage in a ring flame which was made steady by a glass chimney. James Watt, the English licensee of the Argand lamp, recorded that 'they gave a light surpassing in steadiness anything known hitherto'. Liverpool lamps, also in Sheffield plate and brass, were evolved in about 1800. The principle was the same, but an adjustable disc set above the wick increased illumination by expanding the flame, the lower part of the chimney therefore being made globular. By about 1800 oil lamps were made for suspending from the ceiling and from wall brackets, catalogues referring to them in Grecian and Etruscan designs.

Emerson's brass rolled into sheet was shaped into domestic hollow-ware by stamping, a process patented in 1769 by Richard Ford of Birmingham. Compared with hand-raising this lessened the weight of metal required by more than two-thirds, with labour comparably reduced. Kitchen-ware was the chief production until 1780 when stamped brasswork, gilded and lacquered, was made for interior decoration. This included mouldings for wall panelling, sconces, and looking-glass frames. In 1783 Gee and Eginton advertised 'gilt metal or burnished gold frames, borderings and ornaments for rooms in stamped gilt metal'. The Birmingham firm of Yates, Hamper and Company issued a pattern book illustrating such ornament of the 1790's and examples

inspected by Aitkin in 1862 were reported as showing 'that sharp, shallow dies were used and so richly were they gilt that they pass with very good judges for burnished gold'.

Heyday of copper wares

Copper domestic ware continued to be made as formerly. The town coppersmith could show burnished coffee pots with ebony-stained boxwood handles; saucepans of all sizes with uprising handles in hardwood, often the yellow sapwood of *lignum vitae*; slow-burning charcoal braziers for warming foods; ladles and perforated skimmers; chestnut roasters; coach, foot and stomach warmers; cheese toasters; egg poachers and coddlers; wine strainers; flour and pepper boxes; wash-hand basins and jugs; knife, spoon and cheese trays; card racks, and a hundred other articles of domestic use. Frying-pans were made in great quantities, the half-hoop handle fitted with a swivel eye for hanging from a pot-hook. Air warmers were in common use, the early form in the shape of a boot now superseded by the conical type for pushing down vertically into the heart of a grate fire.

Hollow-ware intended to contain food or water had to be tinned inside to combat poisoning hazards associated with copper and brass. Retinning was needed very frequently until 1774 when John Bootie patented the long-wearing method of tinning with hot sal-ammoniac and pure molten tin. Even this was far from permanent.

The stamp was brought into use for shallow, light-weight hollow-ware such as warming-pans, plate covers and ladles. Curves were now introduced into warming-pan design and from 1780 handles were usually black japanned. The Earl of Carlisle's household papers show that a copper warming-pan cost him fourteen shillings in 1741 but in 1780 only three shillings and tenpence. By 1780 the wooden handle might be made to unscrew from its socket, enabling the pan to remain fully enclosed by the bedclothes. The hot-water warming-pan, at first in pewter, gradually superseded the charcoal-heated variety from the 1770's and, according to Edward Thomason, a maker

of warming-pans, few of the charcoal-heated type were sold after about 1810. The hot-water warming-pan had a brass cap in the centre for filling (Pl. 51B).

Bottle roasting jacks operating by clockwork mechanism of brass within cases of brass or copper date from the 1760's onwards, and within twenty years their manufacture had become a considerable trade. John Linwood, in the late 1790's, made mechanical improvements that enabled them to twist and untwist for from two to four hours according to the weight of the load. Such a roasting jack was suspended from a jack-rack clamped to the extending centre of the mantelshelf, or hung within the tall, niche-shaped enclosure of tiined sheet iron known as a Dutch oven. This measured about five feet in height and enabled roasting to be done in front of a coal-fire grate. Its curved sides and top reflected heat upon the rotating joint from which fat and gravy fell into a deep pan below.

Urns for tea and coffee

Tea and coffee urns came into use early in the 1760's, silver styles quickly being reflected in Sheffield plate, copper and japanned iron. They were evolved from the 'tea fountain', a hot-water kettle with a tap fitted immediately above the kettle's flat base, a type that continued throughout the period.

The first tea urns contained a quart and were heated with charcoal. In this design the vessel could be lifted from its stem, which supported a perforated cylinder containing burning charcoal. These were outmoded by 1774 when John Wadham patented an urn in which heat was maintained by a cylindrical box iron. This was made red-hot in the kitchen fire and inserted into a close-fitting heater case, rising centrally from the base within the urn so that the water circulated around it. This type of heater became widespread after expiration of the patent in 1788. At about this time some urns were heated with spirit lamps, these vessels tending to be of fine quality for the smokeless spirits of wine was a costly fuel. Mortar candles might also be used from the late 1790's

Three standard sizes of urn were in regular production in the eighteenth century – quart, three pints and gallon. Giant urns of five to eight quarts date from about 1805. Late Georgian hardware catalogues illustrated them indiscriminately as tea and coffee urns, with the exception of three-pint sizes which were almost invariably captioned as 'Coffee Urn to hold 3 pints' (Pl. 51C).

The dating of japanned wares

Colourful japanned urns and other articles contributed a delightful radiance to late Georgian homes. Vermilion, rich green, chocolate, yellow, tortoiseshell or black formed the background to pictures of considerable merit painted by clever artists and efficient but less persuasive work by capable artisan copyists. Japanned iron took on a new brilliance in the 1760's when new japanning factories opened at Wolverhampton, Birmingham and elsewhere, striving their utmost to emulate Pontypool japan ware, even to the extent of naming their productions 'Pontipool japan'. The scope was wide and included urns, kettles and smokers' brazier sets, chestnut servers, cheese cradles, toilet boxes, coasters, tea canisters, letter racks, trays and waiters (Pl. 51).

Oriental figures and landscapes in shaded gold formed the predominant type of decoration until the mid-1760's when colour was introduced to the gold, creating rich effects. Large areas might be painted with landscapes or architectural designs, such an article as a tray being covered to the edge of the rim. Flower painting dates from about 1780 with flowers and foliage in dull bronze shades. By the 1800's there was a vogue for huge chrysanthemums or asters: stalks were in gold and leaves in shades of yellow. In early work as many as fifteen stovings were given to background colours, the final coating remaining in the oven for between three and four weeks.

A japanned tea-tray, known as a 'hand tea table' was used for the tea equipage, being set out with a tea urn and porcelain. At first it was square or oblong with corners folded and riveted; by 1770 corners were cut and brazed; and from the 1790's hammered turn-over rims were frequent. A circular or oval tray hammered from thinly



(A) Adam plus-column mantelpiece with applied enrichment in head composition. Flared grate with pierced apron, and pierced tongs. *Maker and Son Ltd.*



(B) Flamed and enriched friezes of the late eighteenth century: (top) in 'wrought' (cast metal alloy, which is cast); (below) in steel. *Foster and Albert Brown.*



(a) Brass candlesticks in which socket and stem were cast in a single hollow piece and attached to square hollow foot. Fashionable during late eighteenth century but made in a wide variety of sizes, patterns and mid-nineteenth century. *Private and other Museum.*



(b) Hand-shaped and hollow and fork, silver-mounted handles: 1st, green stained ivory, and, South Staffordshire enamel, gilt, stamped (Stafford) silver (all late eighteenth century); 2nd, late seventeenth century, engraved ivory (inlaid) with silver. *Private and other Museum.*



(a) Japanese tray with hand grips, painted with an all-over sporting scene, c. 1880. A. S. Barton, Eng.



(a) Copper warming pans with stamped rubber pads and felt, cast brass handles, handles of Japanese lacquerwood. Late eighteenth century. *Shaker's Collection.*



(a) Coffee urn in Pouterwood Japan, decorated with rustic landscape with figures and sheep, by Thomas Barker. *National Museum of Wales.*



(a) A group of late Georgian Sheffield plate showing a pair of snuffers and a cream boat, a pair of plated wine coolers, and a pair of salt cellars with blue glass liners. Private Collection.



(b) Two-branch candelabrum with branches twisting around the central shaft which is decorated so that a dim light may be seen. About 1780. Private Collection.

(c) Pewter tankard showing the foot-
less body, massive
reversed handle and per-
forated thumb-piece of the
late Georgian period.
British and Allied
Museum.



(d) Teapot and sugar bowl of Victorian silver metal, designed and engraved in the style of contemporary silver. Shaded beneath L. Victoria. Late 19th. Private Collection.

rolled plate – tinned for fine work – might be encircled with a border of pierced pales, and narrow handle holes might be cut.

Pewter and its rivals

The introduction of liquid lead glaze on ceramics immensely widened the scope of enamelled earthenwares in the average home, as it did the porcelains of the wealthy, and one obvious result was a drastic reduction in demand for the pewterer's domestic ware. Candlesticks in shapes resembling those of brass continued to be made, however, along with a variety of kitchen ware such as salt cellars, casters, jugs, tea canisters, the newly-invented hot-water dishes, and so on.

Highly ornamental desserts of lavish proportions were fashionable at this period and pewterers were called upon to make capacious jelly and blancmange moulds designed to open piece by piece, so that undercut effects such as piles of luscious fruits could be removed without damage. In another design the top and base of the mould might be separate from the main section which was delicately fluted within.

Pewter had other competitors too. A soft tin alloy, so closely resembling silver in appearance that the casual observer would never differentiate between the two, was introduced in 1769 by John Vickers of Sheffield. In the 1780's he was advertising such domestic ware as teapots, sugar basins, cream jugs, beakers, tobacco boxes, caster frames, all following Sheffield plate designs in 'Vickers' White Ware' (Pl. 52b).

Pewter met with additional, and this time deadly, competition in the early 1790's when John Vickers introduced Britannia metal, an alloy of tin, antimony, copper and bismuth, rolled into plate or cast. Its toughness made it a distinct advance on pewter. When polished, this silvery-white metal, faintly tinged with blue, became highly lustrous and greatly enhanced the tables of those who could afford neither silver nor Sheffield plate. Standard quality Britannia metal, if struck with a wooden rod, emits a clear, ringing tone, similar to that of X-crown pewter.

Britannia metal domestic ware until about 1805 was made only in small sizes, constructed from

hand-raised and stamped units. Early in the nineteenth century, however, hollow-ware was spun, and cast decoration might be added. Such ware was lighter in weight than pewter of comparable size. Earthenware and stoneware drinking vessels were made with Britannia metal rims and hinged lids. Spoons and ladles were cast and burnished.

The considerable mid-Georgian trade in tin plate domestic ware continued into the period under review. Table ware included heavily tinned and burnished venison dishes, salmon dishes, soup tureens and vegetable dishes, between the invention of the process of tinning and the development of Sheffield plate. Dish covers and teapots were hammer-shaped, but the seams prevented attractive outlines.

Iron 'kitchen furniture'

Iron plate could be shaped into pots, kettles and saucepans at this period for about one-third the cost of copper, but they were cumbersome objects until the 1760's when carbon iron made possible scale-free plate more suitable for tinning. The Cort patents of 1784 so vastly improved the puddling and rolling processes that almost every article of domestic ware could be made in tinned iron plate. Output soared: in 1788 there were 77 blast furnaces operating in England; by 1806 there were 222. Domestic ware continued to be hand-made for iron plate could not yet withstand the stamp without splitting: a patty-pan, for instance, consisted of several pieces of tin plate brazed or soldered together.

Domestic hollow-ware, catalogued as 'kitchen furniture', in long-wearing, light-weight tinned cast iron dates from 1779 when Jonathan Taylor, a workman at the Eagle Foundry, Birmingham, patented a method of casting oval-bellied and round cast iron pots 'nealing, turning, tinning and finishing the same'. These were attractive in appearance and much cheaper than hand-wrought plate, brass or copper. At first black lead was used as an outside coating: this was replaced by stove-dried varnish from about 1800. At about the same time umbrella stands, door-porters, door-knockers, shoe-scrapers, smoothing-irons, latches and handles were cast by the same process.

Malleable cast iron, in which small objects for the home could be sold at less than one-third the cost of wrought iron, was invented in 1804 by Samuel Lucas of Sheffield. Handles and latches made of malleable cast iron were, for their purpose, quite as strong as those of wrought iron.

Burnished steel around the fire

The focal point of a fashionably furnished room was the fireplate equipped with a portable grate, fender and fire-irons in burnished steel. John Byng in *The Torrington Diaries*, 1791, recorded that 'in summer the grates and fenders are polished up, the tongs, shovel and poker laid up for the summer'. He also observed that when a fire was lighted the brilliancy of the grate was spoiled. Architects designed mantelpiece, grate and fender; the pierced motifs in the steel were repeated in the carving (Pl. 49).

The pierced steel fender, bowed and often with an undulating upper edge, was costly but gave unlimited wear. The hand-sawn pierced design extended from end to end in a single over-all pattern composed of birds, animals, flowers, foliage and scrollwork, surface chased in a manner resembling ornament on silver, and edged with narrow wrought moulding. This style, continuing from early Georgian days, was followed by alternating classic motifs such as the anthemion and star, or urn and rosette, the upper edge bordered with a low, vertical fret-cut rim of repetitive motifs. The same theme might be repeated on the apron of the grate.

These were followed in the 1790's by press-cut steel in thinner gauge, factory made in short panels, wide and narrow, bordered top and bottom with narrow bands of vertical piercings. Many of these were made at Kirkstall Forge, Leeds, where there was an extensive mill for grinding and polishing steel units. Other pierced ornaments consisted of a central band of convex medallions enriched with bright cutting, with pierced backgrounds and borders, the top and bottom edges being strengthened with rows of beading. A panel displaying a large version of the predominating motif might be riveted in the centre. Complex trellis work is also found. Fenders in all these styles were made of

latten or battery brass sheet, too, and late in the period the grate and fender might be of heavily cast and chased brass.

Tongs, shovel and poker were made of burnished iron. At first handle ornament was wrought in the solid metal, but improvements in the quality of iron during the 1780's made it possible to do this by lapping, that is, by turning a piece of hot iron around the heated rod wherever a knob was required. The twisted shank dates from the 1790's, shaped by tools or hand-twisted. The shovels were cut from sheet iron.

Wolverhampton locks

Door locks in the main followed the early Georgian styles with Wolverhampton still leading the way. When George III equipped the Queen's House, now Buckingham Palace, he specified that every state-room lock should be made in Wolverhampton. A new style in mortice lock furniture for fitting into solid mahogany doors was sponsored in the mid-1760's by Robert Adam. Such a lock, which cost twelve guineas, consisted of an expansive back plate of chased and gilt cast brass, in scrollwork designs symmetrically arranged with festoons of husks, centring on the door knob and flanked with a keyhole escutcheon and a matching dummy escutcheon, or a small knob for operating a night bolt.

Lock cases stamped from rolled brass, weighing less than a third of the earlier hand-made type, date from the late 1770's. They were cast too in Emerson's brass with plain, square or moulded edges and surfaces were virtually unflawed by pitting. Brass locks continued to be finely engraved, and intricate damascening was revived from the seventeenth century.

Security emphasis was laid upon wards which had now become highly complicated, but were still not proof against skeleton keys. Robert Barron patented in 1778 a system of fixed wards in combination with levers. Only its own specially made key would open such a lock which within a few years had achieved world-wide renown. Joseph Bramah invented the first door lock with a small key in 1784, operating, not on a sliding bolt but through the medium of a rotating barrel -

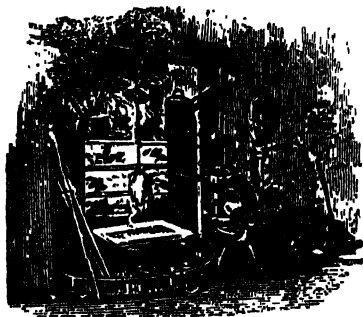
thus anticipating Yale's cylindrical lock of 1848. The first cheap locks were made in 1796 when Isaac Mason of Willenhall first cut the cases from sheet iron and punched and bolstered them by the fly press.

Ornament in lead

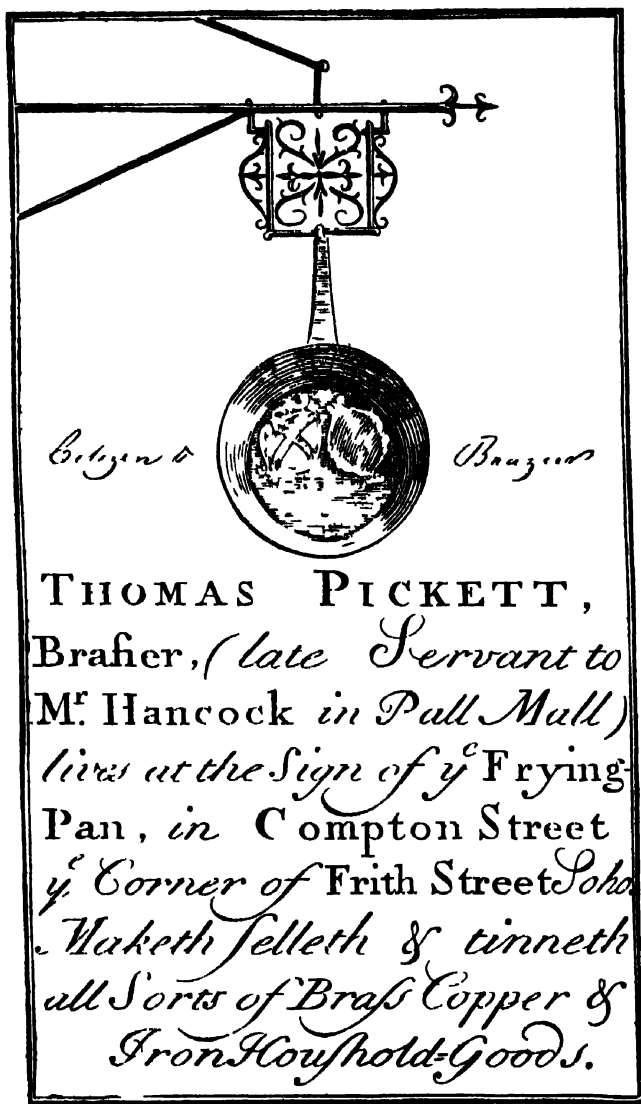
Lead found a new purpose in the home during the late eighteenth century when interior decorators took it into use for making relief figure panels, garlands, vases and frets which were double gilt, or painted after washing eight times with 'gum lac, parchment and red lead'. The Somerset House accounts for 1780 record many payments for decorations of this nature such as lead pateras 2½d. to 10d. each; 19 ornamental friezes to chimney pieces £10 17s. 8d.; lead frieze to book cases, 2s. 6d. per foot. In 1778 John Cheere, lead figure maker, submitted a bill for 'moulding, casting and finishing four large

sphinxes, lead and block tin, at each, £31'. Lead figure making was an established craft of the period. Soft pure lead was used hardened by a process invented by William Storer in 1770 by which 'all sorts of girandoles, frames for pier glasses, tablets, friezes and brackets for chimney pieces and rooms could be chased to the full relief of the boldest and richest carving in wood'.

Front door fanlights were filled with gracefully designed windows outlined with lead castings made sturdy with a backing of iron. Staircase balustrades might also be cast in panels of hard lead lattice work fixed between iron standards a yard or more apart. To the late Georgian even homely lead was an artistic medium, confined within the limited scope of permissible neo-classic design, but playing its gracious part in an age that expected its metalwork to contribute ornamental refinement as well as enduring service to the elegant home.



Tail-piece from T. Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 2, 1804.



Engraved tradesman's card of the late eighteenth century From Sir Ambrose Heal's *London Tradesmen's Cards of the Eighteenth Century*, 1925.

Textiles

Textiles

DONALD KING

In the overall effect of the late Georgian interior, the patterns of textiles played a less dominant role than they had done in earlier periods. This is not to say that the domestic use of textiles diminished or underwent any fundamental change. Textiles retained their practical and decorative value as coverings for floors, chairs, settees, cushions, tables and beds, and as hangings for beds, windows and walls. Quantitatively, the textile furnishings of a fashionable room tended to increase rather than decrease, so that at the end of the eighteenth century interiors such as those of Carlton House were muffled and shrouded in a plethora of draperies, curtains, festoons and fringes. But the taste of the age inclined mainly to plain, unpatterned stuffs, or to materials having designs in a single colour or discreetly powdered with small polychrome motifs. Moreover, it was to the advantage of the artist-decorator, who achieved a new prominence in this period, to exclude from his schemes strongly patterned textiles of variegated colour, in order that the subtlety of his own arrangements of line and form, colour and texture, might be the more apparent. As a result, the more boldly patterned woven stuffs tended to disappear, while tapestry and embroidery, techniques particularly adapted to large-scale polychrome designs, lost their former importance. Only carpet-design retained a bold scale, since the interior decorators found that it could be used to re-echo at floor level the design of the plasterwork of ceilings.

Woven textiles

Besides the non-textile material, leather, which

was extensively used for upholstery, a very large proportion of the woven textiles used in the interior decoration of English houses consisted of plain, unpatterned stuffs. The sheen of satin was much appreciated, and white, cream and other pale-coloured satins were used in great quantities. Lady Mary Coke, visiting Lord Bute's house in 1774, gives a characteristic view of an interior in the contemporary style, when she writes that almost all the rooms were hung with light green plain papers, showing the pictures to great advantage, while the chairs, beds and so on were chiefly of satin, light green and white, which had a very good effect. In Mrs Fitzherbert's house in Pall Mall, Mary Frampton's journal records a room 'hung with puckered blue satin'. Hepplewhite's *Guide* (1788) observes, *à propos* bed-hangings, that 'they may be of almost every stuff which the loom produces' but that 'in state-rooms, where a high degree of elegance and grandeur are wanted beds are frequently made of silk or satin, figured or plain, also of velvet, with gold fringe, &c.' Plain velvets were frequently used for hangings and upholstery, generally in muted shades such as the drab green used by Adam for the gathered wall-hangings of the state bedchamber at Osterley.

Watered silks and silk mixtures were also favourite materials for upholstery, while in the second half of the period chairs and settees were often covered in materials having wide or narrow satin stripes. Silk and silk mixture damasks were extensively used for both upholstery and hangings, as may be seen for instance from their frequent occurrence in Chippendale's bills. These damasks

had floral designs, often of a rather conventional character, in a single colour, generally red or blue, though yellow, green and other colours also occur. Damask was a favourite material for the hangings of state beds; the *Universal System* (1759-63) of Ince and Mayhew records a domed bed in blue damask, while a bed of about 1770 at Harewood has a valance of red damask. In the crimson drawing-room at Carlton House (about 1790) the wall-hangings and window curtains were, according to Pyne, of crimson 'satin damask of a beautiful figure and texture from the British loom'; similarly in the rose drawing-room the curtains and wall-hangings were of rose-coloured satin damask with gold fringes.

Among silks of more than one colour, that used by Adam for the wall-hangings, window curtains and upholstery of the red drawing-room (about 1770) at Syon, with a design of serpentine ribbands and large semi-naturalistic flower sprays in white on a plum-red ground, makes an unusually bold effect. Normally more modest patterns were preferred, and fabrics such as the polychrome Genoa velvets with their large Baroque designs, so much used earlier in the eighteenth century, were no longer fashionable. Brocaded satins, with small polychrome flowers on white or pale-toned satin grounds, were much favoured.

Of woven stuffs in linen, wool and cotton, only the tablecloths and napkins of linen damask demand particular notice. Their designs, entirely in white, were generally floral or armorial; hunting scenes are also occasionally found.

Very little information is available regarding the origins of these various woven materials. The linen damasks seem to have been made in a number of places in England, Scotland and Ireland. Of the silks and velvets, some were no doubt imported from Lyons and other French and Italian centres of silk-weaving, but many were probably woven in England. The weaving of silk was carried on in various towns, among them Macclesfield, Manchester and Norwich, but the chief English centre of the craft remained the district of Spitalfields and Bethnal Green, where it seems to have been introduced by Huguenot refugees at the end of the seventeenth century.

Unfortunately, the detailed history of Spitalfields silk-weaving remains to be written and little is known at present of the designers and master-weavers of the late Georgian period. The decline in the vogue for patterned silks, for both dress and furnishing purposes, evidently caused some distress and unemployment (it was estimated in 1776 that one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight silk looms were idle), but it is likely that production remained at a sufficiently high level to fulfil most of the domestic demand both for plain and for patterned stuffs.

Tapestry

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the demand for tapestry wall-hangings dwindled almost to vanishing point. The great Flemish workshops, which had supplied England and the rest of Europe with most of their tapestries ever since the middle ages, decayed and died. The production of the last notable tapestry-weaver of the eighteenth century in England, Paul Saunders (died 1770), belongs essentially to the preceding period. Only the French centres of the craft, possessing the best designs and the most skilful weavers of the day, and supported by state patronage, kept alive the traditions of fine tapestry-weaving.

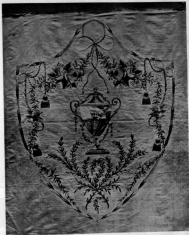
It is characteristic of the taste of the time that some of the most fashionable of the French designs were not of an exclusively pictorial type, but consisted mainly of simulated silk damask with a floral pattern, while the nominal subject of the tapestry was rendered in the guise of a small framed painting, apparently hanging on a wall covered with the feigned silk stuff. Tapestries of this type, the well known *Tentures de François Boucher*, in which the pictorial panels with the loves of the gods and other subjects were designed by Boucher and the floral surrounds by Maurice Jacques, were woven several times by Jacques Neilson at the Gobelins for English patrons. They were not intended to be hung indiscriminately in any convenient room, but were woven to measure, often with furniture *en suite*, for special tapestry rooms, where they were hung edge to edge, so as to cover the entire wall-surface above the dado,



Tapestry Room at Chatsworth Park. The room designed by Robert Adam; the tapestry hangings and upholstery seats at the Chesham 1715-16, by Jacques Schom, after designs by François Boucher.



Detail of corner of embroidered curtain, designed by Robert Adam 1766, for the main bed at Chatsworth Park.



Embroidered panel for a pole screen, about 1790. Vienna and Albert Museum.



*Embroidered portrait of George III, after Zoffany, worked by Miss Mary Knowles, c. 1771.
Private and other Museum.*

in the same way as a silk wall-hanging; it is noteworthy that this method of hanging tapestries seems to have been peculiarly English and was unknown in France. The more important of the sets of the *Tentures de François Boucher* woven for English houses are the following: (1) three large and eight small hangings, with two settees and six chairs, on a rose damask ground, woven 1766-71 for the Earl of Coventry, formerly at Croome Court; (2) three large and six small hangings, with two settees, twelve chairs and a screen, on a mauve damask ground, woven 1766-71 for William Weddell, at Newby Hall, Yorks.; (3) three large and five small hangings on a rose damask ground, woven 1766-71 for Sir Henry Bridgeman, at Weston Park; (4) one large and eight small hangings, with eighteen pieces of furniture, on a grey damask ground, woven 1767-9 for Sir Lawrence Dundas, originally hung at Moor Park and subsequently removed to 19 Arlington Street, London; (5) five large and eleven small hangings, with a settee, eight chairs and a screen, on a crimson damask ground, woven 1775-6 for Robert Child, at Osterley Park, (Pl. 53); (6) three large and three small hangings, with a settee, twelve chairs and two screens, on a crimson damask ground, woven in 1783 for the Duke of Portland, at Welbeck. These hangings for Welbeck represent the last notable commission for tapestries in the Georgian period.

Bibliography: Maurice Fenaille, *État général des tapisseries de la manufacture des Gobelins*, Vol. IV, Paris, 1907.

Embroidery

Embroidery, like tapestry, was much less prominent in the later Georgian house than it had been in earlier periods. In particular, needlework in *gros point* and *petit point*, which had been extensively used hitherto for wall-hangings, carpets and upholstery, failed to harmonize with the lightness and elegance of the new furnishing styles. It persisted, still using the large polychrome floral designs of the preceding period, for carpets, chairs and firescreens, down to about 1765, but thereafter it became comparatively rare. The few carpets and chairs worked in this kind of needle-

work during the late eighteenth century generally have insignificant geometrical diaper patterns in a restricted range of colour.

A technique more in harmony with prevailing taste was that of embroidering naturalistic flower-groups in flat stitches on a white or pale-coloured satin ground. This type of embroidery was principally used, as in the preceding period, for bed-furniture. The hangings of Queen Charlotte's bed (about 1775) at Hampton Court, of lilac and pale primrose satin, have attractive needlework of this kind worked by a Mrs Pawsey, who had a school of embroidery at Aylesbury. A cradle destined for one of Queen Charlotte's children, and now in the London Museum, has a white satin coverlet and curtains embroidered in a similar style. The green velvet and satin furniture of the domed state bed at Osterley, designed by Adam in 1776, also has flower garlands and classical motifs worked in this manner (Pl. 54). These provoked Horace Walpole's caustic observation that the bed was 'too like a modern head-dress, for round the outside of the dome are festoons of artificial flowers. What would Vitruvius think of a dome decorated by a milliner?' The same kind of embroidery, worked with coloured silks in flat stitches on a white satin or silk ground, continued in use down to the end of the century for the small oval, rectangular, or shield-shaped panels of pole-screens. In these panels the motifs most frequently seen are bouquets of naturalistic flowers, maps, or classical urns (Pl. 55); a pole-screen designed by Adam, in the Etruscan Room at Osterley, has an embroidered panel with an urn design.

Wall-hangings in needlework were extremely rare in this period, but Adam's work for Thomas Hogg at Newliston, near Edinburgh, included designs for twelve large embroideries inset into the panelling of the drawing room. These, worked by Lady Mary Hogg in wool appliqué, with the details partly stitched and partly painted in water colours, on a cream watered silk ground, show urns, sphinxes, acanthus scrolls and cameo panels. In humbler settings, the appliqué technique was utilized for coverlets, with floral motifs, cut from printed cottons, stitched to a cotton ground;

towards the end of the period floral panels were being specially printed to serve as centrepieces for such coverlets. A few examples of patchwork quilts, with geometrical designs built up from countless small regularly shaped pieces of silk or printed cotton, may also be attributed to this period.

There can be no doubt, however, that the type of domestic needlework most characteristic of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was the embroidered picture. The retreat of embroidery into the picture-frame, a process which had begun already in the seventeenth century, now reached its culmination in an attempt to reproduce the effects of painting. In this field a number of ladies achieved a fame and eminence which today seem vastly exaggerated, if not entirely misplaced. The embroidered copies after paintings by old and modern masters which these ladies produced, covering their canvas completely with coloured worsteds in long irregular stitches which sought to imitate the brushwork of the painter, are often, indeed, remarkable for their dexterity, but it is hard to take seriously the taste which rated them equal, if not superior, to the paintings which they copied, and set on them values running into hundreds, and sometimes into thousands, of pounds. Of Miss Grey, of Northamptonshire, a contemporary observer notes that she astonished 'the world of painters by her works in worsted'; in 1755, there is mention of 'a bunch of grapes of her doing that are equal to anything of Rubens'; and the Princess of Wales, on seeing another picture of hers, after Rubens, is said to have given her an honorarium of a hundred guineas. It may be that the vogue for these needle-paintings owed something to Queen Charlotte's taste. Mrs Mary Knowles (1733-1807), referred to in a letter from Dr Johnson to Mrs Thrale as 'the Quaker, that works the subtle pictures', was a frequent visitor at Buckingham Palace, and one of her principal works was a portrait of George III after Zoffany, worked in 1771 at the express command of the Queen (Pl. 56). Horace Walpole had at Strawberry Hill a landscape after van Uden by her hand. The most renowned of the workers in this style, however,

was Miss Mary Linwood (1755-1846) of Leicester. In 1776 and 1778 she showed specimens of her work at the exhibitions of the Royal Society of Artists, and in 1787, having first been received and complimented by the Queen, she opened a large exhibition of her embroidered pictures in London. This exhibition subsequently visited Edinburgh, Dublin and the chief provincial towns, and it was once more a feature of the London scene as late as 1831, when *The Times* commented enthusiastically on her last work, 'The Malediction of Cain', observing that 'the forms and expression of the figures discover the power of Michael Angelo, and the whole effect of the piece . . . is almost magical, and beyond the power of the pencil'. Her masterpiece, the 'Salvator Mundi' after Dolci, for which she is said to have refused an offer of three thousand guineas, she bequeathed to Queen Victoria; it still hangs at Windsor Castle. A collection of her work may be seen at the Leicester Museum.

The less skilful or ambitious needlewoman could emulate the productions of these virtuosi by buying panels of white silk on which pictorial designs had been drawn, chiefly in outline, but with the sky and flesh-parts carefully painted in water colours. The dresses, hair and landscape were then embroidered with coloured wools and silks in the characteristic long stitches, while the painted parts were left exposed. The subjects of these pictures are generally romantic scenes of a somewhat lugubrious cast - Charlotte at the tomb of Werther or Fame strewing flowers on the tomb of Shakespeare; mythological, Scriptural and Shakespearian subjects also occur. Another type of embroidered picture was worked in black silk only, on a white silk ground, in imitation of engravings; this style, essayed by Miss Linwood in 1782, was still being practised as late as the 1851 exhibition. Such pictures are generally topographical, though portraits and other subjects are also found.

The trend towards pictorialism in needlework also affected the embroidered sampler, which in this period almost entirely lost its original function as a practice and reference sheet for a variety of stitches and motifs and became a decorative exer-

cise in cross stitch, incorporating a representation of a house, human figures and other pictorial elements, together with some pious verses. Samplers of this type were frequently framed and hung on the wall like the embroidered pictures. Maps, of England, Europe and other parts of the world, were also worked and treated in the same way.

Bibliography: M. Jourdain, *English Secular Embroidery*, London, 1910; A. F. Kendrick, *English Needlework*, London, 1933.

Painted and printed textiles

Painted and printed textiles, though not generally used in the state rooms of the grandest houses, were none the less of great importance in late Georgian furnishing. This was no new phenomenon. In one form or another they had played a significant role since the Middle Ages. But the lightness of their effects was especially congenial to the new furnishing styles and they were extensively used as bed-hangings, coverlets and window-curtains, and for the upholstery of chairs and settees.

Some of the painted silks were imported from China; these have polychrome floral patterns executed in body-colour, generally on a white satin ground. Others were made in England. The brothers Francis Frederick and George Eckhardt, whose factory was in King's Road, Chelsea, took out a variety of patents from 1780 onwards for painted and printed silks, linens and papers; among their specialities were varnished, washable furnishing fabrics printed in gold and silver. Sheraton, in his *Drawing Book* (1791-4) writes of the printed and painted silks of the Eckhardts as being 'adapted for the purpose of ornamenting panels and the walls of the most elegant and noble houses', but no surviving examples of this type are known. Both Hepplewhite's and Sheraton's books suggest the use of small panels of painted or printed silk for the decoration of chairs; this usage is exemplified by a settee of about 1785 at Kyrle Park, which has three oval panels of silk, painted with figure subjects, inserted in the back. Similar small panels, with figure scenes painted in water colours, were

also employed for pole-screens, while a cabinet of about 1780 in the Lady Lever Art Gallery has its doors lined with satin panels painted with designs of urns and flowers. The Eckhardt factory is known to have closed in 1796, but others were no doubt active; as late as 1808, George Smith, in his *Household Furniture*, included painted satin among the materials suitable for expensively furnished rooms.

The import of chintz, the painted and dyed cotton material of India, had been banned since 1701, but it is clear that the prohibition was sometimes evaded. There is an amusing correspondence of 1775 between David Garrick and Sir Grey Cooper, in which the actor pleads for the release of some chintz bed-hangings, which, after being in his wife's possession for four years, had been seized by the Customs authorities. Garrick's wit was not wasted; the hangings, with their designs of slender trees, found their way back to his villa and, eventually, to the Victoria and Albert museum. Mrs Lybbe Powys, visiting Sir Walter Blount's house, Mawley, near Ludlow, in 1771, was moved to remark, 'I think Lady Blount has more chintz counterpanes than ^{our} house ever saw; not one bed without very fine ones.'

The work of the English printers of cotton and cotton mixture materials in the eighteenth century, to judge from the admiring comments of continental competitors, was second to none in both design and technique. Hepplewhite's *Guide* (1788) pays it a somewhat involved compliment in recommending for bed-hangings the employment of 'printed cotton or linen . . . the elegance and variety of which afford as much scope for taste, elegance and simplicity as the most lively fancy can wish'. Unfortunately, these materials were little valued by succeeding generations and surviving examples are rare. In particular the stuffs printed from wood-blocks, which formed the bulk of the production, have almost entirely disappeared. Their floral patterns, often of an Oriental character, were produced by the old Indian technique of madder-dyeing, in a colour range of blues, reds, and violets, with a little yellow and green, generally on a white ground;

dark, almost black, grounds were a special feature of the 1790's, and towards the end of the period the palette was enriched by advances in dye chemistry. Some of the best designs were produced in the old centres of the English cloth-printing industry, on the rivers Lea and Wandle near London, but these factories suffered heavily in this period from the competition of the rapidly developing Lancashire factories, which employed the technique of printing from rollers to introduce a new class of cheap, mass-produced goods.

Besides the block-prints, cloth printed from engraved copper plates in a single colour (red, blue, violet or sepia; additional colours were occasionally added by block-printing) on a white ground enjoyed a great vogue in this period. Such prints have come to be known as 'toiles de Jouy', with reference to the well-known examples produced at the Oberkampf factory at Jouy, near Versailles, but they had been an English speciality for fully a quarter of a century before Oberkampf first turned his attention to them. The earliest record of the process dates from 1752, when Mrs Delany visited at Drumcondra, in Ireland, 'a manufactory that is set up there of printed linens done by copper plates; they are excessive pretty'. This factory was that of Francis Nixon, who in 1757 transferred his activities to Phippsbridge, near Mitcham. In 1758, Benjamin Franklin, on a visit to London, sent home to his wife, for bed and window curtains '56 yards of cotton printed curiously from copper plates', and by the 1760's a considerable number of manufacturers had adopted the new technique. Some had the fortunate habit of signing their work. Without doubt the finest surviving specimens of the type are two signed by Robert Jones of Old Ford, whose factory and equipment (including two hundred copper plates and two thousand wood-blocks) were sold by auction in 1780. The first of these, dated 1761, and printed in red, has pastoral and other subjects derived from engravings by Berchem, Barlow and Sympson; the second, dated 1769 and printed in violet, with additional colours added from blocks, shows some elegantly drawn personages on shooting and fishing expeditions (Pl. 57). John Collins, of Woolmers in Hertfordshire, signed two prints

with rustic subjects in 1765, and a *chinoiserie* piece, based on Sir William Chambers' engravings of his buildings in Kew Gardens, in 1766. A print with fashionably dressed ladies and gentlemen in a garden is signed by the engraver D. Richards of Manchester and dates from about 1785. A design commemorative of George Washington, doubtless made for export to the United States, bears the signature of Henry Gardiner, who operated a factory at Wandsworth in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. There are also a number of anonymous examples with floral, rustic, classical, *chinoiserie*, sporting and topical designs. Our knowledge of this type of textile print has recently been greatly extended by the discovery of three books (one now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, two in the Musée de l'Impression at Mulhouse) containing paper impressions from several hundred copper plates of London textile printers of the late eighteenth century. The popularity of these engraved furnishing prints declined after about 1790 and the early nineteenth century examples, often printed from rollers, tend to be less sophisticated in design and comparatively coarse in execution.

Bibliography: Frank Lewis, *English Chintz* (2nd edition), Leigh-on-Sea, 1942; *Catalogue of an Exhibition of English Chintz*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1955.

Carpets

Heavy, durable fabrics suitable for floor-coverings may be made in a variety of ways – by embroidering in wool on canvas, by weaving, and by pile-knotting as in Oriental rugs. All three methods were in use in the late Georgian period, though the first-named, as has been mentioned above, became comparatively rare.

The tapestry process does not seem to have been applied to carpet-making in England, although carpets woven by this method at Aubusson in France were imported and used in this country. There was, however, a flourishing English industry engaged in the production of various other types of woven carpets. Some were double cloths, i.e., they consisted of two plain cloths of different colour woven together in such a way that first one

TEXTILES

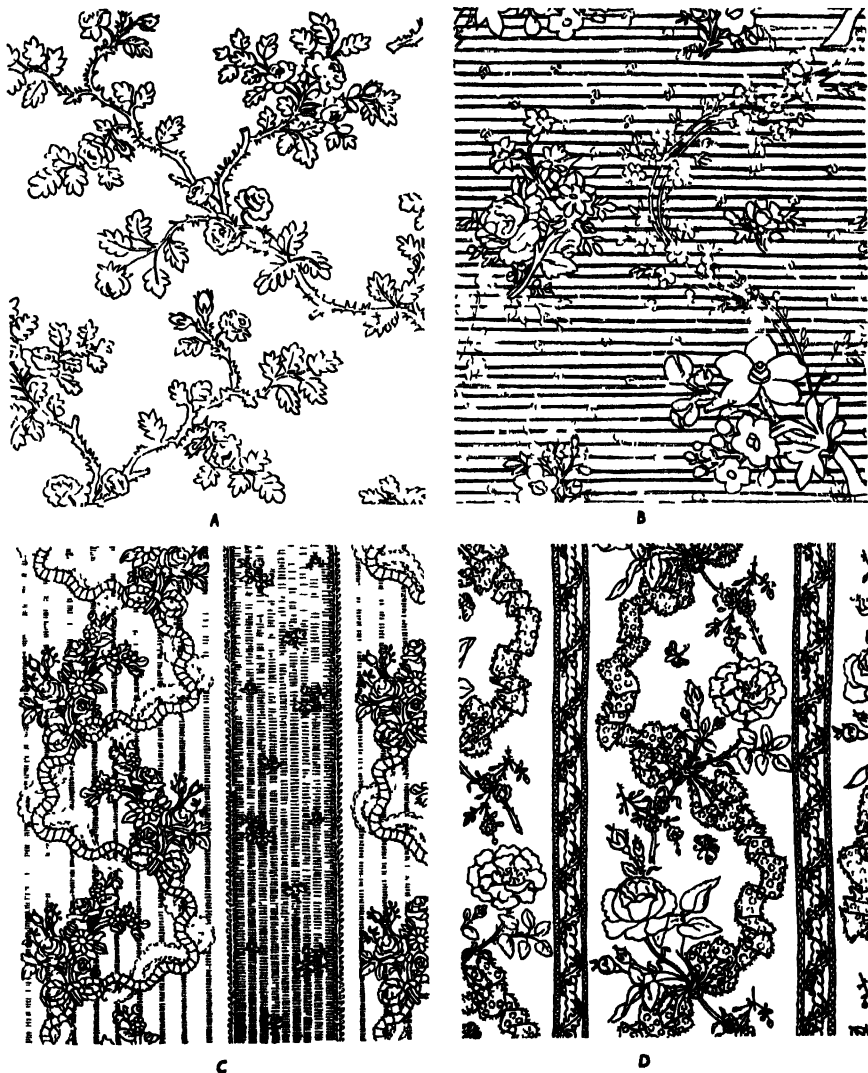


Fig. 1. English late Georgian textile patterns: (A) Silk, c. 1770. (B) Brocaded silk, c. 1770. (C) Brocaded silk, c. 1780. (D) Printed cotton, c. 1790. All in Victoria and Albert Museum.

and then the other cloth appeared on the surface, thus producing a thick material with a two-colour design. Kidderminster gave its name to this type of fabric, which had been made there since the seventeenth century; the same method was also in use in the Scottish centres of the industry, such as Kilmarnock. Better wearing qualities and patterns, with up to six colours, could be obtained in Brussels carpets, which have a looped pile woven in the manner of an uncut or terry velvet. These were woven at both Wilton and Kidderminster; by 1807, the flourishing carpet industry of the latter place numbered as many as a thousand looms. In a refinement of the Brussels type, introduced at Wilton and subsequently known as Wilton carpet, the loops of the pile are cut, on the analogy of a cut-pile velvet, giving a richer, softer texture. Unfortunately, no English woven carpet of this period has yet been identified. Most of them were probably plain or with fairly simple patterns, and were woven in narrow widths which could be joined together to form a large carpet.

Of hand-knotted carpets, the great majority in use in England were imported, as in previous periods, from Turkey, Persia and India, and conformed to the Oriental traditions of carpet design. A few may also have been imported from continental factories, of which the most important was that of the Savonnerie, near Paris. It was the arrival in London in 1750 of some former workers of the Savonnerie that brought about a renewal of the craft of carpet-knotting in England, where, although it had been widely practised in late Tudor and Stuart times, it had since almost entirely disappeared. In 1756, 1757 and 1758, with a view to encouraging the nascent industry, the Royal Society of Arts offered premiums to makers of hand-knotted carpets. The awards were shared equally, in the first year of the competition, between Thomas Moore, of Chiswell Street, Moorfields, and Thomas Whitty of Axminster; Moore's carpet was considered to be the finer but was denied first place since it was nearly three times as expensive as Whitty's carpet, though of the same size. The next year, Whitty again shared the prize, this time with Claude Passavant, a native of Basle who had set up a factory at Exeter,

and in the third year he won the competition outright. These three firms, of Moore, Whitty and Passavant, were the principal English producers of hand-knotted carpets in the late Georgian period. Passavant's work, however, is known only from carpets made before 1760 and is therefore discussed in the preceding volume.

Moore evidently worked for the best houses. Horace Walpole ordered Moorfields carpets for the additions to Strawberry Hill which were completed in 1764. In 1768, Lady Mary Coke paid a visit to the factory and noted in her diary: 'They make several different kinds, and some remarkably fine: we saw one that was making for Ld. Coventry, that he had agreed to give a hundred and forty guineas for: it is indeed excessively fine. There are other kinds that are made like the persian, look quite as well.' Moore is best known for his collaboration with Adam. A carpet at Syon House, with a classical design by Adam carried out in numerous brilliant colours, is signed 'by . Thomas . Moore . 1769' (Pl. 58); an almost identical carpet belongs to the Earl of Shrewsbury. Some carpets with classical and floral motifs at Osterley Park, for which Adam's designs, two of them dated 1775 and 1778, are preserved in the Soane Museum, were probably made by Moore (Pl. 59A, B). Other carpets which probably resulted from this collaboration are two at Saltram, one in the Music Room at Harewood, and several formerly at 19 Arlington Street, which were probably removed, like the Boucher tapestries, from Moor Park. A notable feature of several of these Adam carpets is that they were designed to echo, without exactly reproducing, the designs of the ceilings beneath which they were placed.

Moore's principal competitor, Thomas Whitty, encouraged by seeing Parisot's factory at Fulham, began his first knotted carpet at Axminster in 1755; the factory flourished for many years and remained in his family until it closed down in 1835. Unfortunately, although a few documented pieces exist from the last period of the firm's activity, there is nothing that can be attributed with complete certainty to its first sixty years. One of the strongest candidates is a carpet

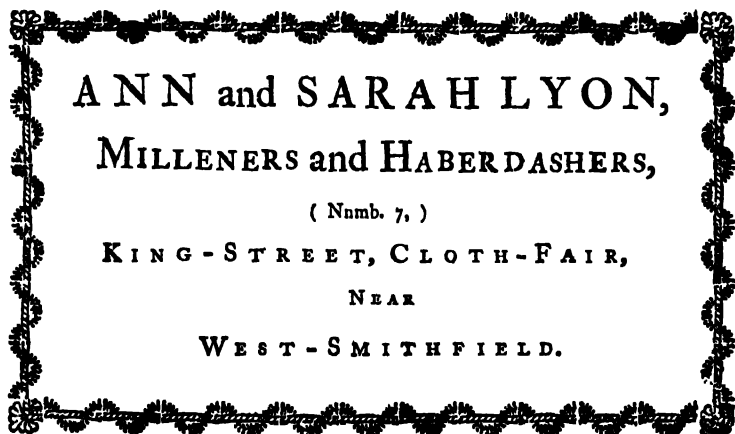


Fig. 2. Female workers 'pencilling' printed textiles, i.e. adding blues and yellows by hand-painting. 1754.

with a heterogeneous collection of motifs in the Pompeian style which was made for the Throne Room at Carlton House (now lent by Her Majesty the Queen to the Victoria and Albert Museum). Closely related to this, and likewise probably Axminster work, are several carpets whose designs of classical and floral motifs are characterized by large central medallions and narrow rectangular panels at each end. Carpets of this group include examples in the Victoria and

Albert Museum (Pl. 60) and at Rocklease Manor, near Exeter, and one formerly at Woodhall Park, Herts. Other carpets attributed to Axminster are two with floral patterns at Althorp and four with classical designs, belonging to the Duke of Devonshire.

Bibliography: C. E. C. Tattersall, *A History of British Carpets*, Benfleet, 1934; *A Dictionary of English Furniture* (Revised edition by Ralph Edwards, 1954), s.v. Carpets.



A late eighteenth-century printed handbill.



Parasailing print, by Robert Jones of Old Fford, c. 1715. Pattern and Mount Museum.



Carpet in the oval drawing-room at Syon House by Thomas Moxon of Wilton's, 1769, after a design by Robert Adam. (The Date of Restoration)



(a) Carpet in the tapestry room at Ouseley Park; by Thomas Mowbray, about 1775, after a design by Robert Adam.



(b) Carpet in the drawing room at Ouseley Park; by Thomas Mowbray, about 1775, after a design by Robert Adam.



Carpet, probably Russian, 17th-18th. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Costume

Costume

C. WILLETT CUNNINGTON

The fashions of an epoch, viewed from a certain distance, often seem to have been designed to suit a particular age-group. In the first half of the eighteenth century, for instance, male fashions imparted an air of dignity to a man of substance and assured position; one might say that those fashions had an 'optimum age' of about 35 to 40.

But in the second half of that century, and beyond, male fashions became more youthful in appearance, more slender and fitting the figure, less stiff and substantial; their optimum age was perhaps 20 to 30.

A similar, though less marked, change may be detected in the female fashions; a massive triangular shape became undulating with emphatic curves. But as there is always in them the desire – outspoken or whispered – of sex-attraction, the range of age-variation is narrower than in male fashions. Their optimum age sways to and fro from 17 to 30 but seldom beyond.

It is as though man's ideal woman varied at times from 'sweet seventeen' to *La Femme de trente ans*.

In the first half of the eighteenth century feminine fashions favoured the latter; in the second half there was a progressive movement towards the former, culminating in the virginal white frock of the Regency period displaying the charms of the youthful form.

This, then, was the essential feature in the fashions of the period 1760 to 1810, a phase of 'Youth knocking at the door'.

It was not unnatural that the fashions of England and France should have had much in com-

mon; if the English gentleman provided the model for men, the young French queen Marie Antoinette was the ideal mannequin for women.

There was also a practical reason why this should have been so: from the beginning of the century the English gentleman had worn woollen textiles for his day suit and towards its close was using them also for evening, reserving silks and satins for ceremonial wear. And English woollen cloth had become the best in the world. On the other hand French silks were unrivalled and English women of fashion naturally favoured them. So that male fashions tended to come from England, female fashions from France.

The Revolution of 1789 was at first viewed with a good deal of sympathy from this country and there seemed nothing to interrupt the exchange of fashions until the Terror led in 1793 to the onset of a war lasting twenty years.

The event divided the period 1760–1810, and with it the trend of fashion in each country. Thanks to smuggling the interchange of textiles and costume designs did not cease during the long war, but in the exciting atmosphere of war, and without the check of foreign criticism, English taste was free to run riot.

It is convenient, then, to take the onset of war in 1793 as a division and to treat the fashions of each part separately.

The former was a phase of extravagant luxury with an abundance of imported silks from France; the latter a phase of wartime substitutes and imported cottons from India.

Whenever the pendulum of fashion swings in

this way towards younger forms of expression it coincides always with a phase of new and disturbing ideas floating in the social consciousness; ideas repugnant to the mature mind of the middle-aged, but attractive and exciting to the younger generation; whereupon fashion turns scornfully away from the one and casts its glamour on the other.

In France those new ideas, traced to the Encyclopedists, exploded in the Revolution of 1789; but they were germinating in England too. Social unrest, an upthrust from the lower classes against the upper, a breaking-down of forms of class-distinction, and a demand for a more democratic form of government, all these were disturbing the social structure in the opening years of George III's reign. In 1760 the heavy Hanoverian atmosphere of the Court disappeared; the new king was a young man of 22 with an English love of outdoor activities, and by the time George III had reached middle age the Prince of Wales had become the leader of fashion. Men's dress could hardly fail to be affected by the youthfulness of, first, sovereign, and then prince.

Feminine fashions tend always to follow man's lead; as he appears more youthful or more mature, so woman hastens to adjust her age to his taste. In the period following 1760 it was natural that her fashions should have started to become younger. Once this direction was taken the impetus swept on until, near the close of the century, the desire to discover modes still more youthful than the last produced the so-called 'classical dress'.

This doubtless had a resemblance to the garb of ancient Greece, but its more obvious appeal was that it was white. Being of cotton and cheap, any woman for a few shillings could assume the dress of a young girl. Being worn with a minimum of underclothing it had the further advantage of revealing the outlines of the whole body and for the first time the shape of the lower limbs became visible; a fashion which favoured only the youthful form and made the middle-aged look ridiculous.

Caricatures of the period perpetually satirized the spectacle of what the Prince Regent described

as 'mutton dressed like lamb'. Never before had feminine fashions been so merciless to maturity.

The Macaroni

Fashions are not only sensitive to prevalent ideas which they attempt to express, but also to certain kinds of events. The reign of George II opened triumphantly; the victories of Clive and Coote had established the English hold on India, whence began to flow homeward a stream of Nabobs laden with spoils.

This new type of *nouveaux riches*, eager to exhibit their wealth, excited an orgy of extravagance in the fashions of the 'seventies, accompanied by a phase of delirious gambling; fortunes were won – or lost – by the turn of a dice-box.

The war with the American Colonies and its humiliating defeats passed almost unnoticed by the world of fashion; far more attention was being paid to that strange phenomenon the Macaroni. 'The Macaroni Club', wrote Horace Walpole in 1764, 'is composed of all the travelled young men who wear long curls and spying-glasses.' It had originated as a kind of protest against the crude fashions of the day, not unlike the Aesthetic Movement of a century later, and the members affected an extreme sensibility and an effeminate style of dress. This soon became yet another form of fantastic extravagance, spreading so widely that contemporaries detected the taint in the costume of the learned professions and there were Macaroni ladies clothed in Macaroni textiles. 'What is England now?' exclaimed Walpole in despair. 'A sink of Indian wealth filled with Nabobs and emptied by Macaronis.'

Beyond the charmed circle of fashion it is not surprising that there was a rising tide of discontent, together with complaints that those decent barriers which used to separate the social classes were disappearing. It was becoming difficult to distinguish the gentleman from his base imitators.

The fact that the tension did not, as in France, explode into revolution was perhaps partly due to this freedom to imitate the fashions and habits of the quality; it allowed a repressed force to dissipate its energy in vulgar mimicry. Our native gift of snobbery proved, as always, a steady

influence. Our fashions in the 1780's, so admired in France, seemed to have a freer air; men with a suggestion of the hunting field, and women, discarding the hoop, wearing even cloth 'tailor-mades' (which they called 'habits').

Sport, in many forms, captured the fancy of all classes; with hunting, horse-racing, prize-fighting, cock-fighting and cricket matches available, who would exchange these for the doubtful excitements of a revolution?

Male fashions, 1760-1793

The suit comprised coat or frock, waistcoat and breeches. The *coat*, now worn for full dress only, was close-fitting, the signs of waist and flaring of skirts disappearing after the 'sixties, the fronts being sloped away; from the 'seventies the curve away from the waist increased so as to expose the bottom of the waistcoat. The close-fitting sleeves had closed cuffs, usually small. From 1765 a narrow stand collar was added. The buttons were flat.

The *frock*, a garment originally adopted by the gentleman from his social inferiors and then somewhat loose, was now close-fitting and distinguished from the coat by its flat turned-down collar. At first worn for 'undress' it became from the 'seventies worn on all occasions except at Court, where a fully trimmed version, the 'French frock', was allowed. The English frock was always plain except for braid edging.

For riding and sport its length was reduced and the skirts often caught back on each side, leading to their being cut away into a 'tail coat' about 1790.

The collar (known as a 'cape') rose from 1785 into a 'stand-fall' for dressy occasions, becoming the 'frock-coat'.

It was single-breasted until 1780, then double-breasted with lapels, often angular and becoming wider in the 'nineties.

Its buttons, unlike those of the coat, were large, becoming enormous and plate-like in the 'seventies, and of metal.

An inside breast-pocket was introduced by the Macaronis in 1777.

The *waistcoat*, without sleeves, had the skirts

of the foreparts cut back at an angle and in the 'eighties gradually shortened, when the popular style was the square-cut 'Newmarket', becoming general in the 'nineties. At first single-breasted, the double-breasted form appeared occasionally in the 'sixties and 'seventies and was very common in the 'eighties and 'nineties.

It had two rectangular pockets; from the 'eighties without flaps.

The *breeches* were close-fitting, becoming excessively tight; closed by whole- or small-falls. The knee was covered over the stocking, with a knee-buckle, replaced by strings in the 'nineties. Braces buttons, one on each side in front, began to appear at the end of the 'eighties, and the garment was beginning to be known as 'smallclothes', from the 'seventies.

Materials

For *coats* and *frocks*, cloth for day wear; for 'dress', velvet, brocade, silks and satins.

Waistcoat: cassimere, fancy silks. *Breeches*, cashmere, buckskin, and stocking-net.

Other garments: The *nightgown* or *nursing gown*, a wrapping negligee worn indoors in place of a frock.

The *banyan*, a loose short gown often worn out-of-doors in place of a frock; knee-length with a wrapping front.

The *surtout* or *great coat*, with two or three broad falling collars.

Neck and wrist wear

The cravat was a strip of lawn or muslin worn round the neck, loosely knotted under the chin and the ends hanging, a fashion favoured by the Macaronis.

The stock was a folded neckcloth round the neck, fastened behind by a buckle. Steadily increasing in height it became known as a 'cravat' from 1785 and was then usually made of muslin.

Lace ruffles were worn at the wrist, disappearing temporarily in 1790 as a 'democratic' gesture in sympathy with the French Revolution.

Footwear

Shoes had rounded toes until 1790; heels were

low and square. Red heels for Court wear were revived in the 'seventies.

The buckles, oblong and smooth, became enormous from 1775 to 1785. At the end of the 'eighties shoe-strings began to replace buckles.

Jockey boots, close-fitting, ending below the knee, the tops turned over, were fashionable for walking in from the 'seventies.

Stockings

A fashion for stripes was marked in the 'eighties and 'nineties.

Headgear

The three-cornered hat, the brim turned up or 'cocked' in a variety of forms (the 'Kevenhuller' with a high cock in front, in the 'sixties; the 'Fan-tail' with the brim turned up high behind, from the 'eighties); the bicorne hat with front and back brim turned up, from the 'eighties. The round hat, with flat-topped crown and flat brim, appearing first in the 'seventies for riding and destined gradually to develop into the gentleman's 'top hat'; commonly made of beaver.

The hair

Wigs were worn by all classes until the war-tax in 1795 on hair-powder. The many varieties fall into two groups:

(1) Wigs without queues: The bob with several rows of curls round the back of the head. Full dress bobs came into fashion in 1760. The scratch bob covered only the back of the head and simulated the natural hair. Cut wigs were short, without curls; worn by the working classes.

(2) Wigs with queues: These gradually became smaller.

The front ('toupce' or 'foretop') was brushed up, and in the 'seventies raised on pads, the natural hair blending with that of the wig by the use of pomatum, the whole powdered.

The sides of the wig had rigid tubular curls ('buckles') lying horizontally, replaced in the 1780's by bushy hair.

The queue had various forms:

(a) the tye, a short bunch of curls tied at the nape of the neck.

(b) the ramilies, the tail plaited and tied.

(c) the pigtail, very long and plaited with ribbons.

The queue became shorter from 1780.

The bag-wig: for full dress, the queue being concealed in a short black silk bag at the nape of the neck.

The Catogan or Club wig: the queue, broad and flat, was turned up on itself and tied to form a pendant loop of hair; very popular in the 'seventies, especially with the Macaronis.

The Major or Brigadier wig: military but often assumed by civilians, resembled a Bob with two corkscrew curls tied together to form a queue.

Wigs were made, not only of hair (human, horse's, cow's, goat's) but also textiles such as mohair and worsted; of copper and iron wire (in the 'sixties and 'seventies), and of feathers, usually drake's or mallard's, which were used to form the summit. Parson's 'feather tops' were very common, and feather wigs for sporting.

Hair powder, of starch, was white for dress wear but blue and other colours were also used; the powder being applied by a blower or dredger or powder puff, the face and clothing protected by a powdering jacket or gown.

The face was clean-shaven.

The beau carried a muff, a long cane, and in the 'seventies 'all the very fine men wear two watches'.

A snuff-box was essential. The more extreme exquisites, with faces rouged and patched, in tight stays and false calves, and heavily scented:

'Soft silky coxcombs, full of nice punctilio,
All paste, pomatum, essence and pulvilio,
With huge bouquets, like beaupouts, daily go,
Tricked out like dolls, to pace the Rotten Row.'

Male fashions, 1794-1810

The war with France from 1793 and 'the era of Jacobinism and Equality' had a marked effect on male costume. 'It was then', wrote Wraxall, 'that pantaloons, cropped hair and shoe-strings, as well as the total abolition of buckles and ruffles and disuse of hair-powder characterized the men.'

To indicate democratic sympathies it was with some the fashion to look slovenly. 'Slouch is the word now, you know. That's the fashion; that's

modern ease' (G. Colman, *The Heir at Law*, 1797).

And while gentlemen were affecting to look like ruffians 'the Lower Classes are invading the boundaries and privileges of the great and fashionable, aping the dress of persons of rank'. (*The Morning Chronicle*, 1800).

In the midst of this fashion ferment there appeared, soon after 1794, a sartorial Napoleon to restore order to chaos. It was the genius of George Brummel which introduced an entirely new idea into the art of male costume.

The Brummel 'Code Napoleon' ordained that henceforth the dress of a gentleman must be distinguished by an inconspicuous propriety, and that its design must no longer be pictorial but architectural; that is to say, it must express social superiority not by colours but by line and proportion, which meant high quality in tailoring and exquisite taste in the wearer.

Against the vulgar intrusions of democracy he set the subtle barrier of 'good taste'. Reform was necessary as the war was producing 'everything disgusting in the name of Fashion . . . slouched hats, jockey boots, half-boots, leather breeches, cropped heads, unpowdered hair . . . and the present race of Bucks without blood, Beaux without taste, and Gentlemen without manners' (*The Oracle*, 1804).

From 1794 the frock-coat developed an immensely high stand-fall collar cut back in front to allow for the high neckcloth swathed round the neck up to the chin. The fronts of the frock were cut away leaving little more than coat-tails at the back, reaching to the knee. The double-breasted style was general, worn buttoned up so that only the bottom of the waistcoat was seen. Wide lapels and large flat buttons gave a military air.

The sleeves, close-fitting, were slightly gathered at the shoulder seam, becoming padded up by 1800. The cuff was inconspicuous, often only a line of stitching or left unbuttoned.

The coat, for full dress, had a high stand collar; in other respects it resembled the frock-coat.

The old-fashioned style of frock with turned-over collar of no great height continued to be worn for sporting activities. It is noteworthy that never

before had the gentleman worn a buttoned-up coat concealing the waistcoat; the latter was losing its importance, being very short and square-cut, generally double-breasted and having a stepped stand-collar with wide angular lapels.

Near the close of the century the double-breasted waistcoat might have a rolled collar continuous with the shawl lapel, though this rolled collar was quite uncommon.

A feature of the 'nineties was the underwaistcoat, a shortened version of the over-waistcoat but protruding an inch or so above its upper border. The under-waistcoat seems to have declined in favour after 1800.

The aim of the short waistcoat and cut-away coat fronts was to expose as much as possible of the legs and thighs encased in tight breeches or pantaloons; a fashion clearly designed to be sex-attractive and favouring the slim figure of youth.

Breeches reached well below the knees where they were tied with strings. The opening was a small fall. As braces had become necessary with these skin-tight garments, braces buttons came into use.

Pantaloon, appearing in the 'nineties, were equally tight and reached to the ankles where the sides were slit for the purpose of pulling on and then buttoned.

From 1800 male fashions tended to become somewhat modified; the day frock-coat becoming known as a 'morning coat,' often single-breasted though still buttoned up, developed a rolled collar and lapel, shrank in size or disappeared.

The waistcoat, usually striped, with a lower stand-collar cut well back, and the neckcloth now no longer enveloping the chin but with a broad bow spread under it.

By 1806 the day and evening coat had acquired an inside breast pocket and pockets in the tails, the outside pockets having often disappeared (Figs. 1, 2).

For evening the white waistcoat and the coat of dark blue or green with light-coloured breeches and white silk stockings, were becoming the recognized garb of the gentleman. By 1807 the evening breeches were invariably black.

In 1810 nankeen trousers were becoming



Fig. 1. Full Dress, December 1806. *Le Beau Monde, or Literary and Fashionable Magazine*.



Fig. 2. Morning Walking Dress, 1806. *Le Beau Monde, or Literary and Fashionable Magazine*.

fashionable at seaside resorts for summer wear by day; this garment, borrowed from sailors, and destined eventually to obliterate the allurements of the male leg in an irrecoverably dark, total eclipse, had a social significance; a century before the gentleman had adopted the working-man's frock, and now the sailor's trousers, a plebeian garment to which ladies of refinement would allude as 'a gentleman's inexpressibles'.

There was, of course, the exquisite Dandy 'dressed for the morning in my Brutus wig, coat, waist-coatee, boots, gilt spurs, Barcelona neck-cloth, my shape braced up in stays' (*The Morning Herald*, 1809) but such, who figure so largely in the caricatures of the period, scarcely represented the true fashions.

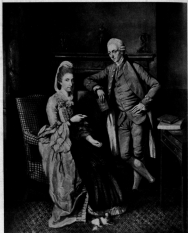
The tax on hair-powder in 1795 led to the general abandonment of wigs except by those who



(a) Duke of Grafton, 1766. Country suit of cloth, the front and waistcoat of same material.
Fogge Museum, London.



(b) Four men, by Boucher, 1766. Two wear coats, two breeches. Each shows considerable difference in details (style, make-up, embroidery, materials).



Francis Foxon-Whitcomb and wife, 1780-90. The lady in open robe edged with ermine, tight white ruffles and apron. The man in a suit (coat with small-cuffs). The wig. *Temple News Place, London.*



(a) *A Misanthrope*, 1790. From *The Museum Ship* (20).



(b) *The Gubbick Family*, 1805. Note a double-breasted waistcoat, another horizontally striped. The lady in brilliant dress and towering hat. *Walter Gubbey, Esq.*



(c) *'Autumn'*, a print by E. B. Harris, 1788. The woman's feathered hat, pointed-up bodice and floured skirt of her gown are conspicuous. The man is double-breasted waistcoat with wide lapels and round hat.



(d) *Sir Christopher and Lady Selwyn*, by R. B. Harris, 1788. The truck with high ruffled collar and skirt clinging away; she in open robe and pointed bodice. From *Autumn Ship*, *Aut.*



(a) A 'Joanney' satirist, 1799, wearing a flower hat, a large carriage wig, short coat and high stand-up collar.



(b) John Jackson, by H. Mannum, c. 1800. A double-breasted frock coat with wide rolled collar, tight breeches. The high stepped collar of the waistcoat is just visible.

(a) Fashion plate, Lady in dress of 1766.



(b) A Lady in riding dress and another in Court dress of 1776. From 'The Ladies' Pocket Book'.





(a) A fashion, 1776. The 'Dormouse' Cap.

(a) Fashion plate of 1774. One lady wears an open robe and the other a closed gown with white waist. From 'The Ladies' Pocket Book'.



(b) Fashion plate, 1776. Figure on left shows a trussing hat, the shoulders draped in a shawl, and high-waisted dress. The other shows the back of a riding habit. From 'The Ladies' Pocket Book'.



A



B

(A) Catherine, wife of John Lubbock of Southall, 1766. The van dyke edging round the top of the bodice was the height of fashion.

(B) Two ladies in day dress, circa. High-waisted white cotton dresses suitable for summer. Thin pointed slippers without heels. From *Misses' 'Valley of Fashion'.*



(C) Two evening dresses circa. Trained open robes over light-colored dresses. Figure on the left wears a turban. From *Misses' 'Valley of Fashion'.*



(a) Two ladies in evening dress, 1807. Heads bared over coloured slips. Very high-waisted and trimmed; thin shoulder straps, elbow gloves. From *Fashion of London and Paris*.



(c) Three ladies in day dress, 1807. All wearing round dresses, high-waisted; the one on the left wears a square of blue muslin over a white muslin walking dress. The centre figure wears a white muslin dress, made with a 'mantua' bodice. The right-hand figure is in a mantua bodice, decorated with a Spanish veil of blue muslin. Fashion plate from *Le Belle Assemblée*.

(d) Lady at her toilet, 1807, by Gillman.

chose to pay the guinea tax; the rest wore their own hair somewhat long and dishevelled—the 'Brutus crop'; short whiskers imitating the military began to appear soon after 1800. Powder on the natural hair was still used for 'full dress'.

Out of doors the fashionable footwear was the Hessian boot, calf-length and decorated in front with a tassel, and jockey boots reaching nearly to the knee and having the tops turned over; indoors, long pointed shoes with low heels.

The overcoat or surtout had two or three cape-collars.

The round hat had replaced the angular, and the crown was tall and straight, the brim often very wide; but with the new century the shape began to approximate towards that of the Victorian 'top hat'.

Feminine fashions

In the half century from 1760 to 1810 the feminine shape passed through a striking sequence of changes. In 1760 the domed hoop had passed its maximum size and had begun to shrink, so that from a vast triangular outline woman's form became in the 'seventies undulating with small 'pocket hoops' and in 1775 a 'false rump' (or bustle). In the 'eighties the hoop vanished (except for Court wear) and exaggerated curves, with a bouffant figure resembling that of a pouter pigeon, became the mode.

At the onset of the great war in 1793 the artificial shape which woman had preserved for centuries was discarded and thin flowing 'Classical' robes, over a minimum of underclothing, revealed the outlines of the body to the astonished spectator.

As the new century opened a more tubular outline with stiff vertical lines completed the transformation of shape, from that of the Great Pyramid to Cleopatra's Needle.

The phase of artificial shapes, 1760 to 1793

The three structural types of dress were the *open robe*, exposing in front an ornamental petticoat, the *closed robe* or *gown*, and the separate *bodice* and *skirt*, each type with its varieties.

(x) *The open robe.*

(a) The sack with box-pleated back and the

overskirt, trained or short, commonly hitched up to expose the flounced petticoat. A style going out of fashion by 1780.

(b) The English gown with close-fitting back continuous with the overskirt; sleeves to the wrist. A style lasting well into the 'eighties.

(c) The nightgown, a fashionable demi-toilette with the overskirt pleated all round to the bodice but open in front. This persisted into the 'eighties.

(d) The Polonese, the height of fashion from 1770 to 1785; the overskirt was bunched up into three puffed-out draperies at the back exaggerating the bustle shape. 'It is janty beyond expression.'

In the 'eighties the open robe acquired a high waist, the front of the bodice puffed out by a 'buffon'. With this a sash was worn and the trained overskirt no longer hitched up.

(2) *The closed robe*, developing in the 'eighties and being known as a 'gown'; the bodice closed by lacing, and the lower part by buttons or ties to the hem. Long tight sleeves to the wrist.

The 'great-coat dress', popular in the 'nineties, resembled a buttoned-up great-coat.

(3) *The separate bodice and skirt*, as a form of 'undress' or morning dishabille, comprising a jacket and petticoat, appeared in the 'seventies. A version was the 'Riding Habit', the jacket cut on masculine lines and worn with a waistcoat. Made of cloth, this forerunner of the 'tailormade' was worn not only for riding but also as a morning costume.

Neckwear

From the 'seventies on the neck was draped with a kerchief, very much puffed out in the 'eighties (the 'buffon') and often a ruff, while a tippet covered the shoulders.

Other accessories: Aprons long or short were worn on all occasions.

Outdoor garments were cloaks, long and short, with threequarter-length hooded cardinals, and pelisses, threequarter-length with armhole slits.

From the 'eighties, after the hoop had been discarded, great coats buttoned down the front.

Headgear

For indoors, butterfly-shaped 'fly caps' in the



Fig. 3. Ladies in the most fashionable headdresses, 1780.

'sixties; followed by mob caps and in the 'seventies the 'dormeuse' with side flaps concealing the cheeks. The cap increased in size in the 'seventies and 'eighties as the coiffure expanded. Turbans for 'dress' and 'undress' were worn from the 'sixties on.

For outdoor wear hoods and calashes from the 'seventies.

As the hair mounted in height in the 'seventies the hat was either very small or else large and worn tilted on one side or the coiffure covered with a towering beehive-shaped hat.

The brim expanded in the 'eighties, becoming the shape familiar in Gainsborough's portrait of the Duchess of Devonshire; or with a puffed soft crown (the 'balloon hat') or tall in the shape of a flower-pot.

Immense attention was devoted to the head and hair in the 'seventies with masses of artificial hair raised on pads and rolls, mixed with pomatum

and covered with powder; the whole decorated, in the evening, with flowers, vegetables, etc., and crowned with a plume of ostrich feathers; the feathers surviving for Court wear down to modern times (Fig. 3).

Footwear

Pointed shoes with narrow heels and large buckles were the mode.

Feminine fashions, 1794-1810

The war, starting in 1793, appeared to originate a change in woman's dress which was, in fact, a stage further in that simplification which had already begun. Silk became extremely expensive and woollen cloth was needed for uniforms, whereas Indian cotton textiles were available and cheap.

Consequently white dresses of muslin, cambric and calico became the mode even in winter and

were worn by all classes. The signs of class distinction, at least by day, almost disappeared, and the cruder forms of sex-appeal became universal. The general aim was to look as naked as possible.

The open robe with petticoat still persisted but was being gradually displaced by the round gown (a closed dress later known as a 'frock').

The round gown was at first constructed with the upper part of its front made as a pinned-up flap which could be let down so that the gown could be put on over the head; after 1800 a simpler construction began to come into favour, with a back opening fastened by lacing or buttons.

For day wear the round gown was quite plain, but for evening a half-length 'open robe' or else a sleeveless 'vest' of richer material could be worn over the gown.

In 1806 the 'chemise dress', the neck closed by a draw-string and edged with a frill, closely resembled the undergarment of that name.

Throughout this period the very high waist-line (Fig. 4) accentuated after 1800 by short corsets, emphasized the bosom, especially when the top of the dress was cut as low as possible. 'What delicate mind can view with unconcern the *nudes* we meet everywhere? . . . the bosom shamefully exposed, and far more, the ankle' (1806).

The classical form of dress with flowing train gradually abated; by 1803 a single flounce or tucks appeared round the hem, as the skirt, becoming tubular, was shortened to ankle-length.

By 1807 the hem was being embroidered or vandyked, and the skirt slightly gored so that its shape became a narrow isosceles triangle sustained over petticoats.

The classical features had practically disappeared, as in that year the Spanish slashed sleeve was in fact a symptom of gothic revival, coupled with vandyking and scalloping of borders and elaborate embroidery over the bodice.

The phase when 'all the necks, arms, shoulders and bosoms in the kingdom were thrown open to the eye of the gazer' was over; it had been found difficult to look distinguished when multitudes of bodies much alike were exhibited in dresses much alike.

By 1810 the ancient principle of illusion and

the subtle charm of class distinction recovered their sway as irresistible lures.

Accessory garments

The spencer was a short-waisted, skirtless jacket with long sleeves worn over the dress out of doors.

The shawl, originating in the 1780's, became highly fashionable in the 'nineties and beyond, the small Norwich silk shawls being especially so; the 'pine pattern' started its long career in the 'nineties. Large silk shawls with a deep fringe and square Scotch shawls of silk and cotton with printed patterns appeared by 1800.

The pelisse of cambric or muslin, with long sleeves, and the fronts hanging down to the knees, and Josephs (long tunics with loose sleeves) together with cloaks of various lengths were for



Fig. 4. London Dress, May 1799.

outdoor wear. Shoes were flat and pointed, with thin soles, the toe becoming rounded and a slight heel added by 1810.

The hair was 'dressed in the Grecian taste' with light curls in front becoming 'cropped in full curls' by 1808. In the early years of the century wigs were often worn over cropped hair by the 'dashers of the haut ton'.

Headgear

For day, mob caps of a large size covered the head. For evening, the half-handkerchief flat on the crown or the cornet cap with a cone-point behind; for more dressy occasions, the turban.

For outdoor wear an immense variety of hats and bonnets appeared, especially after 1800; all possible shapes and sizes of every implication except the demure, came and went, and small veils were often worn with them.

Both hair and hat attempted to reflect in spirit the events of the war; Egyptian modes in 1805 and 1806, military helmets, Spanish touches during the Peninsular campaign, a Trafalgar tuiban in 1806 . . .

Materials

Although simple muslins, cambrics and calico sufficed for a few years after war had broken out, smuggled silks soon re-asserted their appeal and Italian sarcenet, satins, velvet and lace became increasingly in demand, especially for evening wear, after 1800. As the dress had no pockets, handbags ('ridicules') were carried. All through the war facial make-up was lavish, especially in the years of classical 'simplicity' when artificial bosoms of wax or wool provoked *The Times* to exclaim, in 1799: 'The fashion of *false bosoms* has at least this utility; that it compels our fashionable fair to wear *something*.'

The most singular feature of the costume in these war years was that though we were fighting against revolutionary France, Englishwomen affected a 'democratic' simplicity of dress imitating more or less the French spirit of equality, of which the logical expression is nudity. Hence the lament of *The Chester Chronicle* in 1799: 'There is so little to be concealed at present that there is scarcely room for any fashion at all!'



Tail-piece from T. Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 1, 1797.

Portrait Miniatures

Portrait Miniatures

JONATHAN MAYNE

It is usual to regard the period of the maturity of Sir Joshua Reynolds as the golden age of British portraiture in oils, and until recently it was equally usual to consider the contemporary school of miniaturists as representing the highest peak of achievement which that art was to reach in this country. If a change of taste and an increase of knowledge during the last twenty years or so have between them done much to modify this somewhat naively 'progressive' view, it would be foolish to deny however that in the hands of its finest exponents – Meyer, Cosway, Smart, Engleheart, for example – the later Georgian miniature offers a dazzling spectacle. As Mr Carl Winter has pointed out in a lecture¹ on the subject, 'it must finally be said that, tempting as it is to generalize about the character and tendency of eighteenth-century miniature painting, no other period produced actual works of outstanding individual quality in such large numbers. If one could assemble all the excellent miniatures of the period, without regard to the names of their authors or their subjects, they would prove a difficult obstacle to belief in the theory of decline' (a theory which has sometimes been put forward in direct opposition to the previously held belief in the gradual and steady progress of the art from humble Tudor beginnings to its apogee in the Age of Cosway).

But it is better, no doubt, to cease from fruitless

¹ 'The British School of Miniature Portrait Painters', Annual Lecture on Aspects of Art, Henriette Hertz Trust of the British Academy, 1948 (London, Geoffrey Cumberlege), p. 16.

and invidious comparisons between one age and another, and to content oneself with saying that the Late Georgian period, which is the subject of the present essay, saw the last of several great flowerings of the British Miniaturist's art. It saw the full exploitation of the possibilities of the use of transparent water-colour on ivory, and, before its close, the onset of that attempt to rival oil-paint in a suggestion of permanence and solidity which, when a little later it was combined with the anti-linear influence of the first developments of photography, was responsible for the final debasement and virtual eclipse of the art.

Jeremiah Meyer

Our period may conveniently be held to start with an exhibition – that of the Society of Artists, which opened in London in April 1760 and was the first ever to be held in England at which the works of living artists were presented to the public. In the following year a secessionist group, The Free Society of Artists, initiated its series of annual exhibitions, and these were followed in 1769 by the first exhibition of the newly founded Royal Academy. The first miniaturist whom we have to consider here was in fact an exhibitor with the Society of Artists from the beginning, and furthermore he was the only miniaturist pure and simple among the foundation-members of the Royal Academy. This was Jeremiah Meyer, R.A. (Pl. 69A, a), who, though born at Tübingen in Germany in 1735, had lived in England since the age of about fourteen and later became a naturalized citizen. In his early twenties he received

instruction in enamel portraiture from Christian Friedrich Zincke, who also was of German birth, though long since permanently settled in England. Meyer continued to paint enamels throughout his career – indeed his first exhibit with the Society of Artists was in this medium – but it is as a technical innovator in water-colour on ivory that his great accomplishment and historical importance lies. Although ivory, in distinction to vellum, had been adopted by miniaturists abroad and in this country from the early years of the eighteenth century (Rosalba Carriera is generally credited with its earliest use), it is nevertheless true to say that for a long time its possibilities had been neglected, or at least unexplored. That is to say that for the first sixty or so years of the century miniaturists had painted more or less thickly on the surface of the ivory, so that its characteristic glow and sparkle had been to a large extent obscured. Although in his earliest works Meyer followed the practice of his senior contemporaries, from the early 1770's, when his existing miniatures become more numerous, we begin to see emerging those qualities which, when further developed by Cosway and others, constitute the special glory of the late eighteenth-century miniature – qualities of freedom and elegance in drawing, delicacy in colour, and above all luminosity. To some extent these qualities are interdependent; a controlled freedom of drawing (helped by an increase in the physical size of the miniature which is noticeable in the 1770's), when combined with an evanescent delicacy of colour, allows the brilliance of the thin ivory to make its full effect. Meyer's mature style, as shown for example in his portrait of an unknown lady reproduced here, is essentially linear. If it is difficult to appreciate this satisfactorily in a reproduction, the treatment of the sitter's hair nevertheless betrays it to an evident degree; an original miniature by Meyer when studied under a glass reveals in fact a whole surface built up not of stippling but of an infinity of fine lines crossing and recrossing one another at more or less acute angles. A sketch-book in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was previously attributed to Hoppner but has now been convincingly restored to Meyer by Mr

Graham Reynolds,³ demonstrates this fact even more clearly.

Meyer's career was one of official as well as artistic distinction. Before his election to the Royal Academy he had already received a gold medal from the Society of Arts and had been appointed miniature painter to the Queen and painter in enamel and miniature to the King. He exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1769 until 1783, when he retired from practice. He died in 1789.

Richard Crosse

Richard Crosse (1742–1810), only a few years younger than Meyer, deserves to be considered next for stylistic no less than chronological reasons. As in the work of Meyer, there is a strong linear element in his painting, and like Meyer he enjoyed a new freedom of style which contrasts markedly with the work of his immediate fore-runners. In his idiosyncratic system of colouring, however, the resemblance ends. Richard Crosse's miniatures have a tendency to be dominated by a bluish-green tone which, as Mr. Reynolds⁴ has pointed out, suggests an affinity with the earlier portraits of Reynolds. While this particularity renders Crosse's miniatures comparatively easy to identify, it can sometimes become an unattractive trait, especially when it invades the complexions of his sitters. Apart however from this general stylistic criticism, and apart from an occasional hint of sentimentality in his work, Crosse was a miniaturist of consistent accomplishment. His drawing was distinguished, and his feeling for character, particularly in his male sitters, was perhaps more acute than that of Meyer.

Unlike the majority of artists working at this time, Richard Crosse (Pl. 69c, d) came from a family of landed gentry, living near Cullompton in Devonshire. It is not known with whom he studied – indeed he is said to have been largely self-taught – but by the end of the 1770's he is shown by his record-book (which is now in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum) to

³ In his *English Portrait Miniatures*, London, A. & C. Black, 1952, p. 136.

⁴ Graham Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 142.



1



2



3



4

- (1) *Unknown Lady*. Private and other collections.
 (2) *Thomas Frankland*, aged 24 in 1775. *East-India Collection*.
 (3) *Johann Meyer, M.D.* (1709-82). *Private and other collections*.
 (4) *Johann Meyer, M.D.* (1709-82). *Private Collection*.



- [a] Hermann Goetsch, n.a. (1742-1811), Anna, Countess Winchelsea, *Anna's Hall Collection*.
 [b] Hermann Goetsch, n.a. The Duke of Wellington, *dated 1811. Vienna and other Museums*.
 [c] Hermann Goetsch, n.a. Mrs. Louther, *in the lid of an ivory and gold snuffbox. Vienna and other Museums*.



1



2



3



4

- (1) *René-André Carlier, d.a. Philippe James de Luxembourg, d.a. Marie-Étienne Chardin.*
 (2) *Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin (1732-1804). An unknown lady, dated 1779. Paris and other museums.*
 (3) *Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin (1732-1804). An unknown child, dated 1779. Paris and other museums.*
 (4) *Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin. Self-portrait, dated 1783. Paris and other museums.*



a



b



c



d

- (a) GEORGE BOWEN (1770-1822). An unknown Lady. *Finch and John Mason.*
 (b) GEORGE BOWEN. Mrs. Colborne. *Finch and John Mason.*
 (c) GEORGE BOWEN. Mr. George P. Bowyer, dated 1807. *Finch and John Mason.*
 (d) GEORGE BOWEN (worked 1770-1822). An unknown Lady. *Finch and John Mason.*



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

- (a) CHAS. HENNESSY, R.A. (1744-1814). An unknown Lady. *M. E. Baker Collection.*
 (b) CHAS. HENNESSY, R.A. An unknown Lady. *M. E. Baker Collection.*
 (c) WILLIAM WILSON (1761?-1800). An unknown Man. *M. E. Baker Collection.*
 (d) JOHN RAVER (worked 1784-1800). An unknown Man. *Private Collection.*



- (a) *Unknown Portrait* (1769-1835). An unknown Miss Fennell and other Maids.
 (b) *Unknown Portrait*, An unknown Lady Fennell and other Maids.
 (c) *Unknown Portrait* (1769-1835). An unknown Lady and two Children. M. E. Davis Collection.



GEORGE CHINNERY, R.A., (1724-1802), Mrs. Robert Marston,
dressed sitting. Painted and J. Hart Brown.



- (a) *Thomas St Lawrence* (1760-1825). The Hon. Thomas St Lawrence, M.P., Bishop of Cork and Ross, Farnley and other Mansions.
 (b) *Anne, Countess of Devonshire* (1711-1825). The Duchess of Devonshire, dated 1810. Farnley and other Mansions.
 (c) *John Combe Esq.* (1764-1825). An unknown Lady, dated 1810. Farnley and other Mansions.
 (d) *John Combe Esq.* (1770-1825). Possibly Sir Charles Farnley, dated 1810. Farnley and other Mansions.

have been a prolific worker. A few years later his production began to decline, and, although he did not die until 1810, he seems to have given up practice entirely by the end of the century. Little of detail is recorded concerning his biography; he is known, however, to have been born a deaf-mute, and to have spent his last years in the care of a cousin who was a prebend of Wells. He remained a bachelor throughout his life, having in 1778 fallen deeply in love with his cousin's sister, a Miss Sarah Copley, who was already at that time engaged to Benjamin Haydon. She married Haydon in 1782, and Benjamin Robert Haydon, a son of the marriage, relates in his *Memoirs* the affecting story of a last reunion between his mother and Crosse, the day before her death and three years before his. The account is too long to be quoted here, but it is to be recommended as bringing before us in a touchingly sympathetic manner the figure of a miniaturist who otherwise is hardly known to us except through his works.

Richard Cosway

The next two miniaturists to be considered – two indeed of the best-known in the history of the art – were born within a year or so of one another. The exact birth-date of neither is recorded, but available evidence suggests that Richard Cosway (Pls. 70A, B, C, 71A) was born in 1742 (at all events he was baptized in November of that year) and John Smart in 1742 or 1743 (probably not in 1741, as has often been maintained). About Cosway there is a considerable amount of biographical material. He was the son of the headmaster of Blundell's School, Tiverton, and showed early ability as a painter; indeed before he was twelve years old he was sent to London to study with Thomas Hudson, who had been Reynolds' master. Cosway's first ambitions were in fact in the direction of full-scale portraiture in oils, and his first exhibit, at the Society of Artists in 1760, was a portrait in that medium of the drawing-master Shipley. In the following year he began to exhibit miniatures, but he continued also to paint and to show oil-paintings throughout the greater part of his career. On the foundation of the Royal Academy Cosway enrolled as a

student (at the age of 27), becoming in 1770 an Associate, and in the following year a full, Academician. Ten years later he married a Miss Maria Hadfield, who, though of Irish parentage, had been born and brought up in Italy, where she had herself studied painting and had had (according to her own testimony) the advantage of associating with some of the leading artists of the time. It was in the years immediately succeeding his marriage that Cosway's real artistic and social fame began. Already well known for the foppishness of his appearance and behaviour, as is evidenced by two satirical prints published as early as 1772, it was about 1783 that he seems first to have attracted the favour and patronage of the Prince of Wales; very soon he became the centre of an almost notoriously gay social life. Living first in Berkeley Street, and then, from 1784 until 1791, in the central part of Schomberg House in Pall Mall, the Cosways entertained lavishly, holding a regular *salon* at which many of the social notabilities of the time were frequent visitors. The patronage of the Prince, which is said to have been bestowed as a result of a miniature-portrait which Cosway painted of Mrs Fitzherbert, furthered his professional success to a degree unreachd by any of his contemporaries, and the nature of his particular talent was such that it flourished in the atmosphere of this success as at no other period of his life.

It was about this time that Cosway took to signing his miniatures, on the back, with the somewhat bombastic Latin inscription which is familiar to all students – and forgers – of his work: 'R^{dius} Cosway RA Primarius Pictor Serenissimi Walliac Principis Pinxit.' The earliest recorded example of this signature bears the date 1787, but there is evidence that he was already using some such form in the previous year, to which date should probably be referred his appointment (if he was ever officially appointed) as First Miniature Painter to the Prince.

In 1791 the Cosways moved to Stratford Place, Oxford Street, where they were to remain until 1821, the year of Cosway's death. During this last period of his life, Cosway's character and circumstances appear to have gradually altered. Like

others of his contemporaries he became interested in the occult and the esoteric (Blake indeed was not alone in claiming to have had ghostly sitters in his studio); but, what was worse for his material prosperity, he became sympathetic towards the revolutionary ideals which were current at the time. According to the testimony of his cousin, quoted in Cunningham's *Life*, 'he was one of those sanguine men who perceived in the French Revolution the dawn of an empire of reason and taste in which genius and virtue alone would be worshipped'. It was only to be supposed that this would affect his relationship with the Prince, and we find in fact that little by little court patronage began to decline. Cosway retained a fashionable clientèle, however, and though his style became gradually less flamboyant and more austere, he does not seem to have lacked for sitters.

As a painter Cosway can trace his origins to the same tradition as Meyer, though, as we have seen, he was some seven years younger than that artist. Like Meyer, he is known to have studied the technique of enamel in his youth, and like Meyer's, his earliest work is not altogether unconventional for its time. Although there is a paucity of dated 'documents' for his development into the great Court miniaturist of the 'eighties and 'nineties, it seems likely that it was Meyer's example that pointed the way to his full understanding of the use of transparent water-colour. Such miniatures as can be referred to the 'seventies already show a partial realization of these possibilities (see, for example, Pl. 70A), but it was not until a little later that he came to make a regular practice of that elegant and dashing economy of pigment which is such a feature of his best Court work. Again like that of Meyer, Cosway's fully developed style was essentially linear, though whereas Meyer's use of line tended towards angularity, Cosway's was more gently rhythmic and on the whole somewhat broader. His palette was severely limited; a pale blue sometimes predominates, especially in the background which he often painted in the manner of a sky; apart from this, he virtually confined himself to greys, sepias, blacks, carnations and pale yellow, 'green', as Dr Williamson pointed out in his book on the artist, 'being an

exceptional colour, very seldom made use of'. At the same time he began to adopt certain distortions in his drawing; enlarged eyes and gracefully lengthened necks become in fact a kind of hallmark of his middle period—mannerisms which were taken over by many of his followers and imitators.

Reference has already been made to an austerity which begins to be noticeable in Cosway's miniatures from about 1805. This coincides in time with the cessation of the Prince's patronage, and takes the form of a more penetrating, psychological type of portraiture, careless of artificial elegance and depending for its realization on colours which are almost muddy. Some of the artist's most telling works are the product of this period; one may reasonably regret the wonderfully controlled flamboyance of the earlier works, those perfect counterparts of the late eighteenth-century age of elegance, but it is at least arguable that many of these austere works of the artist's old age, which have not unreasonably been compared to the last works of Frans Hals, have a peculiar merit of their own which is in its own way as valuable.

John Smart

John Smart (Pl. 71B, C, D), who was Cosway's almost exact contemporary, was in some ways his almost exact antithesis. Described in an eighteenth-century *Memoir* ⁴ as 'a man of the most vulgar manners, grossly sensual and greedy of money to an extreme', he nevertheless lived a quiet, industrious life, and painted a series of miniatures whose almost unwavering excellence of quality is perhaps only surprising for the fact that he nowhere shows the slightest awareness of the contemporary developments of the art at the hands of Meyer, Crosse or Cosway. If Meyer be held to mark the point in the history of the eighteenth-century miniature at which a decided innovation took place, Smart may with equal justice be regarded as the conservative follower of Luke Sullivan, Gervase Spencer, and other members of the mid eighteenth-century group which Mr Rey-

⁴ *Memoirs of Thomas Jones*, published as the Walpole Society's Volume No. 32 (1946-8), p. 73.

nolds, in his book already cited, has named 'The Modest School'. Very little is known of Smart's early life; he must, however, have been a precocious child, for he won second prize (to Cosway's first) at the first competition of the Society of Arts, which was held in 1755 and was open to boys and girls under fourteen years of age; he continued to win prizes in succeeding years, and in 1758 was placed first, to Cosway's second.

The earliest extant miniature by Smart is signed and dated 1760, and already it exemplifies the fundamental characteristics of the artist's mature style to a degree unparalleled by the early works of any of the artists so far considered. The reason for this is fairly evident, and has already been implied above. For Smart had no stylistic conflicts, and but few stylistic developments ahead of him. The manner which he inherited from his predecessors and early made his own was to be the manner in which he worked throughout his life. It is possible to confirm this with considerable accuracy, for it was Smart's almost invariable habit to sign and date his miniatures from the very outset of his career, and thus a fairly complete index of his year-to-year achievement is available for study.

The most important episode in his life, perhaps, was his visit in 1785 to India, where he remained for ten years. There he met with considerable success, being appointed for the duration of his stay as miniature-painter to Muhammed Ali, Nawab of Arcot, and his family. Several of his miniatures of that native prince are known, as are other portraits of Indians. He also worked extensively for the English community in India. The miniatures of this period can be easily distinguished by the fact that Smart added a Roman I after the date which followed his signature.

On his return to London he began in 1797 to exhibit at the Royal Academy, having previously remained faithful to the Society of Artists, and indeed having borne office in that organization. Thereafter he continued to exhibit at Somerset House until his death in 1811, and his later works show little or no falling off in his powers.

Smart's style is one of the most easily recognizable of all the late eighteenth-century masters;

his enamel-like finish is indeed all but unique in a period which saw a sudden loosening and broadening of brushwork and a development of calligraphy such as we have already noted in some of his predecessors and contemporaries. Nor did Smart adopt the exclusive use of transparent colour in the manner of Cosway or Meyer. His colour is bright and fairly thickly applied, and it is perhaps for this reason that his miniatures remain today to a remarkable degree unfaded. His imagination and vision were indeed limited; he seldom seems to have aspired beyond the immediately pretty, and where that prettiness does not already exist in his sitters, he tends to present us with a somewhat prosaic image. Much subtlety of characterization was beyond him, and even the faintly ironical smile in his self-portrait of 1797 (Pl. 71D) is an unusual feature of animation to be found in his work. When this much has been said in criticism, it is possible to endorse the generally held view of the outstanding attractiveness of his miniatures. Given a child or a pretty girl as his sitter, he is inimitable; his painting of costume and accessories is of the greatest delicacy; and even when the physical size of miniatures began further to increase in the 'eighties and 'nineties of the century, he still contrived to preserve that jewel-like quality of surface which, on a slightly smaller scale, had been his special prerogative from the outset of his career.

George Engleheart

George Engleheart (Pl. 72A, B, C), the third of the three artists who together seem to form a kind of triumvirate over the late Georgian miniature, was born in 1750, some eight years after Cosway and Smart. His father, a plaster modeller, was of German origin, and his early studies were carried out first with George Barret, R.A., the landscape painter, and then in Reynolds' studio. It was not until 1775 that he set up in practice on his own as a miniaturist. From that date until 1813, when he retired to the country, he led a life of phenomenal industry; his record-books, like those of Crose and of certain others of his contemporaries, have been preserved, and from these we can gain an idea of his activity. In the years between 1775 and

1813 he painted nearly five thousand miniatures – an average of well over a hundred a year. It is small wonder that his works are so frequently met with. Even after he retired from regular practice he continued to paint on occasions, his last work being dated 1829, the year of his death at the age of seventy-eight.

Engleheart's style followed the general pattern of his times. His earlier miniatures, belonging to his first five years or so of practice, are modest in scale and restrained in idiom. From about 1780 a greater assurance becomes evident, and certain characteristic mannerisms begin to be developed – for example, a brittle and crimped manner of drawing hair, a use of opaque white in the outlining of drapery which almost gives an impression of starch, and an enlargement and intensification of the eyes. Nevertheless, in spite of a certain automatic elegance which is sometimes to be held against them, the miniatures painted by Engleheart during this central part of his career contain a surprisingly high proportion of authentic masterpieces. If, as Mr Winter⁸ has suggested, 'the animal that lurks in the breast even of civilized man seems to have been seen too often by Engleheart rather as a complacent tabby asleep in a milliner's box', it must nevertheless be conceded that the animal, even if unduly domestic, was regularly of the highest possible breeding and distinction.

Engleheart's final phase may be distinguished in his work from the mid-1790's until the end of his career. His miniatures of this period are frequently of larger size than before, and the scale of his forms is also correspondingly greater. Although it is hard to detect a diminution in his technical powers at this time, there does seem nevertheless to be a slight decrease of intensity, and this is perhaps to be attributed to a defect of imagination rather than to any other single cause. Engleheart's style had been formed under the influence of an aristocratic ideal; if it could effectively enough accommodate itself to the growing bourgeois ethos of the early nineteenth century, it could only do so at a certain sacrifice. Engleheart

was perfectly capable of providing the more prosaic and realistic images which the new patronage required; the problem however of bringing an equal emotional pressure to bear on this new type of work was perhaps more than he was able, or inclined, to solve, and thus there seems often a certain lack of vitality about the miniatures of this last period.

Some lesser miniaturists

In an essay of the present scope it is impossible to do more than draw the main outlines of the period, and when, as in the late Georgian epoch, there were probably more miniaturists at work than at any other time, before or since, in our history, it is inevitable that a considerable injustice will be done to some of the secondary figures. Some of these indeed it is already unjust to characterize in this way. Ozias Humphry, R.A. (1742–1810) (Pl. 73A, B), for example, was an artist of great distinction, and is often considered on the same level as Cosway, Smart and Engleheart. He is one of the exceptional artists of the period whose work in certain of its technical respects, provides a small-scale counterpart of the full-scale portraiture of the time – in this case, that of Reynolds. Andrew Plimer (1763–1837) (Pl. 74A, B) has also been greatly admired in modern times, but of recent years his popularity would seem to have been on the wane. He is said to have been a servant to Cosway in the early 1780's, and it is true that his style owes something to that master. But his mannered and repetitive elegance often tends to superficiality. Other artists, who though correctly described as 'minor', yet maintained a remarkably high standard of workmanship, were such men as Samuel Shelley (1750?–1808) (Pl. 74C), Joseph Saunders (exhibited 1772–1808) (Pl. 72D), Richard Collins (1755?–1831), Charles Robertson (1760–1821) (Pl. 76A), John Barry (worked 1784–1827) (Pl. 73D), George Chinnery (1774–1852) (Pl. 75), J. T. Barber Beaumont (1774–1841) – but the number could easily be doubled or trebled without admitting any perceptible lowering of standard.

We have already noticed, when discussing Engleheart, a slight change that began to char-

⁸ Carl Winter, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

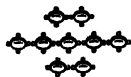
acterize the patronage of the early nineteenth century, and in concluding this brief survey it is necessary to return for a moment to this point. For it was this cause above all, perhaps, that helped to bring about a perceptible modification in the miniature-portrait itself. The aristocratic ideal, as best realized by Cosway and Engleheart, was already losing its impetus, and a new bourgeois naturalism was beginning to take its place. At the same time the miniaturists, like the contemporary water-colourists, were seeking to enhance the status of their art; one can detect symptoms of this in the still increasing size of their works, and even more in an increased solidity of facture. Miniatures were ceasing to be elegant objects of adornment – pendants, bracelets or brooches – as in some sense they had been since Holbein's time, and were already becoming small pictures to be framed and hung on walls or stood on tables.

Andrew Robertson

It is usual to refer this development to the conscious innovations of the Scottish miniaturist, Andrew Robertson (Pl. 76B). Born in Aberdeen in 1777, Robertson came to London in 1801. He had already worked for some years in the North, but his real historical début occurred when shortly after his arrival in London he made a large miniature copy (measuring some 8 inches by 7) of Van Dyck's portrait of Cornelius van der Geest (then believed to represent Govartius). When this was shown to Cosway he could not at first believe that it was a water-colour miniature at all, it was so heavily painted in imitation of oil: and when Shee, the future P.R.A., saw it, he realized that here was the new type of miniature that he had been looking for; in the words of a contemporary

writer, 'Cosway and Shelley he [Shee] allowed had their merit, but a person is wanted . . . to paint large miniatures in the style of that picture of Govartius'. The new style gained rapid favour, and Robertson was soon appointed miniature-painter to the Duke of Sussex; a year or two later he spent some time at Windsor painting portraits of the Royal princesses.

As befits a man who was deliberately seeking to make something that would challenge the oil-portrait on its own ground, Robertson was a slow and conscientious worker. We know, for example, that one portrait took him 22½ hours of sittings, as well as half as much time again spent on background and accessories – 'a week's hard labour', as he described it. But in spite of this, Robertson's work at its best has a lively and sometimes even a spontaneous quality that comes as a surprise to us when we think only of his unusually painstaking methods. He had a strong gift for characterization and a sense of drama which together saved his portraits from being merely accurate inventories of faces. The revolution in style which he initiated was indeed made necessary by the general movement of events in the general world of taste; but he was something more than just a peg on which events hung themselves, and the same may be said of the best of his contemporaries and followers, such as A. E. Chalon (1780–1860) and Sir W. C. Ross, R.A. (1794–1860), who reacted to the same set of external stimuli and furthered the same development in the art. The fact that, wise after the event, we can see only too clearly that these developments were leading towards a not too distant degradation should not blind us to a real merit in the works of those artists who came to maturity in the early years of the nineteenth century.



Jewellery





Page from S. Diehl's book of designs for jewellery, published in London in 1752. It shows designs for a necklace, a carriage ornament and six brooches.



(a) Necklace with pendant, garnets set in silver-plated, about 1750-60. (b) Pendant, gold set with garnets and diamonds, late eighteenth century. (c) Pendant, gold set with garnets and pearls and an engraved miniature of Queen Charlotte, late eighteenth century.



(d) Breast ornament in form of bouquet of flowers, encrusted gold set with diamonds, about 1750-60.

NOTE: Fashion in eighteenth century jewelry was so much greatest international that it is extremely difficult to determine its country of origin. Not all the pieces illustrated are of English manufacture but they do nevertheless represent the type worn in England between 1750 and 1760. Those most likely to be of actual English manufacture are shown on Plates viii and ix, xix and vi, and lxx. All the pieces illustrated are in the Victoria and Albert Museum.



(e) Spray brooch, gold and encrusted stones set with rubies and diamonds, about 1750-60.